A Forest Plan is a strategic long term plan that aims to encourage the sustainable management of forests and woodlands.
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Forest Plan application process</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1 – Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2 - Scoping Report</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3 – Preparing Your Forest Plan</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4 – Approving Your Forest Plan</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5 - Forest Plan 5 Year Review and 10 Year Renewal</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6 – Further Advice</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1 – Approved SFGS Forest Plans and Rural Development Contracts</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2 - Guidelines, data sources and policy documents to help prepare a Forest Plan</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3 – Forest Plan 5 Year Review</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4 – Administration Process after Forest Plan is Approved</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Forest Plan application process

- Grants to prepare a Forest Plan are available through the Woodland Improvement Grant Option (option 47) within Rural Priorities. Rural Priorities are part of the Scottish Government Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP).
- The application process is undertaken online and full details are available at www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP.
- Before you apply you will need to obtain a Business Reference Number (BRN) and be IACS registered to access funding.
- Rural Payments online is where you make your application (link from SRDP website). You will need to enrol and be issued with a User ID and password.

All work within Rural Priorities must help to deliver Regional Priorities. The most appropriate Regional Priorities for Forest Plans are:

- Regional Priority 14 - Landscape (packages 15 & 16)
- Regional Priority 23 - Improved Carbon Sinks (package 31)

Where an approved Forest Plan is required as part of the eligibility criteria of another grant you must first obtain approval for your Forest Plan.

Note 1: By-pass Statement of Intent – you may choose to bypass the Statement of Intent (SoI) but you must complete a proposal in all cases.

Concept Map: This shows the main constraints and opportunities (see Section 2).

Note 2: If your application is for forestry options only and under Regional Priorities 14 (Landscape), 21 or 23 (Climate Change), is non-controversial, then we will use the On-going approval process for your application.

UKFS: The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) aims to promote good forestry practice. Your proposals must meet the requirements set out in the UKFS.

Note 3: Appendix 4 explains the process once the Forest Plan is approved.
Section 1: Introduction

A Forest Plan is a strategic plan that describes the major forest operations over a 20 year period. It brings together the management objectives, silvicultural prescriptions, environmental, social and landscape factors into a comprehensive plan that aims to deliver long-term benefits through sustainable forest management.

Forest Plans are effective management tools for:
- clearly setting out your long term plans
- getting 10 year approval for felling and thinning
- helping to obtain forest certification

Grant support is available to prepare a Forest Plan through the Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) for long-term forest planning under Rural Development Contracts – Rural Priorities (RDC-RP).

The detail in your plan should be in line with the scale, complexity and sensitivity of the woodland. We have prepared a number of Forest Plan examples to show what is expected in a range of different situations. These are available on our web site at www.forestry.gov.uk/wighelp

When do I need a Forest Plan?
If your woodland is more than 100 hectares, you need a Forest Plan to access the following RDC-RP grants:
- Improving the Economic Value of Forests
- Sustainable Management of Forests – Native Woodlands
- Sustainable Management of Forests - Low-Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)
Strategic Forest Plans

- Sustainable Management of Forests – Public Access
- Sustainable Management of Forests – Livestock Removal

If your woodland is less than 100 hectares then you require a simpler Management Plan to apply for the same grants. A Management Plan template is available from our web site www.forestry.gov.uk/wighelp to show you what is required. Please note that there is no grant payment for preparing a Management Plan.

You can still prepare a Forest Plan for areas less than 100 hectares, if you wish.

From the 4th April 2012, you will also need a Forest Plan for the following Options:
- Woodland Improvement Grants – Restructuring
- Sustainable Management of Forests – Restructuring Felling

Transitional arrangements for these two options are in place up to 4 April 2012 and you should contact your local Conservancy office or view the details on our web site www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland.

Who can apply?

Individual woodland owners or lessees can apply. Groups of owners or lessees can co-operate to create a shared Forest Plan for all their neighbouring woodland. However each owner must apply separately and get approval.

How do I apply?

Details of how you apply are available on the Rural Priorities web site www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP

Before you apply will need to obtain a Business Reference Number and register the land under the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS)

IACS is the system of control developed to administer EC grants under the Common Agricultural Policy. The Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) is governed by this policy and applies to all Rural Development Contracts - Rural Priorities grants.

We recommend that you initiate this process as soon as possible.

What areas should be included in the plan?

Your application should include all woodlands on your property. Include any areas planned for woodland creation (although the woodland creation area does not attract a grant payment).

Open ground that is integral to the Forest Plan up to a maximum limit of 20% of the total Forest Plan area is allowed. This should not include areas such as open farmland or open hillsides.

Your plan must show the areas of felling, thinning and restructuring that you intend to carry out over a 10 year period and for which you would like approval. The Forest Plan should also outline proposals for a 20 year period.
Grant Support
The grant for preparing the Forest Plan is £20 per hectare for the first 200 hectares and £5 per hectare for any remaining hectares. There is a minimum payment of £400 and a maximum payment of £15,000 (see Appendix 2).

The grant is paid once we approve the Forest Plan which includes the work involved in producing the Scoping Report. Payment is based on the total area of woodland within the plan, including felled areas due to be restocked and open ground up to 20%. Any areas planned for woodland creation are excluded from the payment area.

UK Forestry Standard
Your proposals must meet the requirements set out in the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS). The Standard sets out the criteria and standards for the sustainable management of forests and woodlands in the UK and aims to promote good forestry practice.

Getting expert advice
The Forest Plan process places an emphasis on quality and accuracy. We will not approve a Plan produced from a superficial survey or poor analysis of the information. We recommend that you engage the services of a professional forestry agent to help prepare the Plan especially where a landscape character analysis is required.

Existing Forest Plan Holders
If you have an existing Forest Plan, approved under a former scheme such as the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme (SFGS), this can continue until the expiry date. All restocking will be paid at an equivalent rate to that which is contained in the RDC-RP forestry options using a dual rate grant which combines the Sustainable Management of Forests Restructuring Felling grant and the Woodland Improvement Grant Restructuring Regeneration grant (see Appendix 1 Approved SFGS Forest Plans and Rural Development Contracts).
Grant Support under former schemes

If you have existing commitments under former grant schemes e.g. a Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS), then these cannot be waived and you must carry out any outstanding work. Any existing WGS or SFGS contracts will be paid according to the terms and conditions specified within these contracts.

Public Access

You must make provision for public access, where it has been customary or where there is local interest, and management of public access to woodland must be in line with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.
UKWAS and Existing Management Plans

We will accept UKWAS and existing management plans as Forest Plans where they are up to date and the following key issues are satisfactorily addressed:

- Management Planning – outline felling, thinning & regeneration over 20 years with first 10 years in detail.
- Consultation – relevant stakeholders have been involved otherwise you might need to carry out a scoping exercise.

- A Tolerance Table is included (see Table 4).
- Production Forecast – basic crop data for input to the Private Sector Forecast is required for woodlands over 100 hectares
- Maps are clear and accurate – felling, thinning, restructuring regeneration maps showing outline for 20 years and detail for 10 years.

You cannot claim grant if an existing plan is accepted as a Forest Plan.

Summary

- A Forest Plan is a strategic plan that describes the major forest operations over a 20 year period.
- The detail in your Plan should be in line with the scale, complexity and sensitivity of the woodland.
- You must have an approved Forest Plan if your woodland is greater than 100 hectares and you want access to Improving the Economic Value of Forests Option and most of the grants within the Sustainable Management of Forests Option.
- From the 4th April 2012, you must have an approved Forest Plan, if your woodland is greater than 100 hectares and you want access for Woodland Improvement Grants Restructuring Regeneration and Sustainable Management of Forests Restructuring Felling.
- If your woodland is less than 100 hectares then you require a simpler Management Plan. You can still prepare a Forest Plan for areas less than 100 hectares, if you wish.
- We recommend that you get expert advice especially where a landscape character analysis is required.
- Grant payment for preparing the Forest Plan is made once your Forest Plan is approved.
- You cannot claim grant if an existing plan is accepted as a Forest Plan.
Section 2: Scoping report

Scoping provides an opportunity to explain your objectives and plans to other relevant parties and for you to take account of their views. Scoping is an informative process that helps to identify the key factors that should be included within the Forest Plan. It seeks to avoid any unexpected issues arising during the later, formal consultation phase. It is important to engage local interest in your Plan, especially from recreational users.

It is important to engage local interest in your Plan especially from recreational users.

It is your responsibility to carry out the scoping exercise but we will agree with you which stakeholders should be involved and the type of scoping that should take place.

Information to Stakeholders – Concept Map and Short Summary

You must give sufficient information to allow them to consider the issues. You should provide a copy of the Concept Map, prepared as part of your Proposal for RDC-RP funding, together with a short summary of your key proposals such as felling, thinning and restocking and public access.

You must update the Concept Map with any new information as a result of the scoping exercise.

Type of Scoping

We will agree with you the type of scoping, taking into account the size, the extent of operations and the sensitivities in your plan.

No Scoping

In cases with low sensitivity we may agree that scoping is not necessary and that formal consultation of the Forest Plan is sufficient.

Scoping by letter or Email

For most cases, scoping can be carried out effectively by letter or Email. This is the normal type of scoping to expect.

Interested parties should be given 28 days to provide their comments.

Scoping by formal meeting

Scoping can be carried out by inviting relevant statutory consultees, neighbours and local community to a formal meeting.

Scoping by public meeting

In high level and sensitive cases we may ask you to hold a public meeting, either during the day or in the evening, or both, in a convenient location.

Written submissions should be accepted from parties unable to attend.
Format for a Scoping Meeting

If a Scoping Meeting is required, the following list will help you to prepare:

- FCS and applicant should agree who should chair the meeting. The Case Officer should always be present at a scoping meeting.
- Ask for introductions from those present. They should give their name and who they represent.
- Give apologies received from those who could not attend.
- Outline the purpose of the meeting ("To outline the main proposals and to identify the key issues that need to be considered during the Forest Plan preparation......")
- Give the order that the meeting will follow.
- Outline your proposals.
- Ask the representatives to present their comments. You should record the issues raised and any relevant comments.
- Discuss, clarify and explore solutions to any issues raised.
- At the end of the meeting, summarise the main points.

Record of the Scoping Process

You must prepare a short Scoping Report summarising the results from the Scoping process. It should include all the issues raised by the participants, their relevance and how you will deal with them. Tables, similar to the ones below, are a useful way of setting this out.

Concept map

This map should show the main factors that will impact the management of the woodland. Highlight the constraints (factors which reduce the freedom of action) and opportunities (factors which allow greater flexibility).

This should include relevant aspects of the physical conditions, growing stock, biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and public access.

A broad indication of activities such as felling, thinning and replanting may be included at this stage.

The Scoping Report provides a concise summary of the Scoping Process
### Scoping Report

#### Part 1 - General details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of property</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RDC proposal number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Plan area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of scoping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Part 2 - Key issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key issues</th>
<th>Raised by</th>
<th>Detail any likely impact</th>
<th>Detail measure(s) to be taken to address key issues</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Water supply to forest cottages | Mr Smith, local resident from 7a Forest cottages | Potential damage to water supply from harvesting operations | • Water supply to be clearly marked on Forest Plan and on ground  
• Harvesting contractors to be notified | • Area Forester Alan White responsible for action |
| Raptor breeding site identified (previously unknown) | Scottish Natural Heritage | Disturbance of nesting site | • Schedule operations to avoid site in breeding season | • Incorporate into Conservation Plan |
Completing Your Scoping Report

Your report should summarise:

Identifying the Key Issues

• Identify the key issues and explore desired outcomes.

• Describe any concerns expressed, requests for survey or assistance and any support offered by each participant.

• Describe any existing or potential access (including any customary access, which may not be on a statutory or permissive basis).

• Provide an updated Concept Map at 1:10,000 or a scale that is suitable to clearly show the areas affected by any of the issues raised.

Addressing the Key Issues

• Try to make an objective assessment of the likely impact that each issue could have on the planning and the management of the forest work. This should recognise and highlight areas of potential conflict between the various objectives of the participants.

• State how each issue could be planned for within your Forest Plan and how you might resolve any conflicts (this might include any proposed amendments to management policies).

• The ‘Notes’ column can be used not only to record comments about issues raised but also issues which are not expected to be resolved as well as prompts for follow up action.

• Give an outline of any surveys to be undertaken.

• Circulate the Scoping Report to stakeholders and invited participants for comment.

• Make the final Scoping Report available to stakeholders either electronically or for viewing at the applicant’s address/office and the local Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy Office.

Submitting Your Report

Send a copy of your completed Scoping Report to your local Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy Office for approval. Your Case Officer will confirm whether the report has adequately covered all the issues.

Summary

• Contact your local Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy Office and agree the type of scoping to take place and the stakeholders to be involved before you commence the Scoping process.

• Give sufficient information to allow stakeholders to consider the issues. This should include a copy of the Concept Map and an outline of your proposals.

• Update the Concept Map with any new information as a result of scoping.

• The Scoping Report should provide a concise summary of the key issues raised and the measures you will take to address them.

• Send a copy of your Scoping Report to your local Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy Office.

• The cost of the Scoping process is included in the payment for preparing the Forest Plan.
Section 3: Preparing your Forest Plan

This section gives advice about preparing your Forest Plan. You are encouraged to provide concise descriptions with a clear rationale for management decisions. Good use of tables, charts and maps will reduce the need for long text explanations.

We expect four main maps:
- Location map
- Concept map
- Phased felling including thinning map
- Restructuring/Woodland Creation Proposal map.

Where a Plan is more complex other maps may be required. Examples of Forest Plan maps are shown on our website www.forestry.gov.uk/wighelp

Table 1 lists the main components we need to see in your Forest Plan. Your plan may contain other information but the core information and assessments in the table must be present.

We recommend that you read the Forest Design Planning – a Guide to Good Practice. This will help you prepare your Forest Plan. You can download a copy from the publication section on our website www.forestry.gov.uk/publications.

Survey Woodland

You are expected to collect information about the woodlands to inform the planning process. The relevance and degree of detail will depend on the context of the woodland and assessments should include appropriate aspects of the physical conditions, growing stock, biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and public access.

The need for specific surveys such as particular species or archaeological surveys will usually be highlighted during the scoping process and we will not normally expect you to fund surveys simply to look for features of interest in the woodlands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Mapping Guidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Use up-to-date Ordnance Survey Mapping (or mapping of a similar standard and detail). Ensure you have appropriate copyright permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ensure maps are at a scale appropriate for the detail being shown. A 1:10,000 scale map should be used for the majority of maps in your Forest Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Details and operations should be clearly and accurately shown and not obscured by any folds or marks on the map.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ensure your maps have a title, scale and legend to clearly identify what it is showing and that it is consistent with your Forest Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Include the grid reference for your Forest Plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 1 - Main components of a Forest Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part A</strong></td>
<td><strong>Description of woodlands</strong></td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Property details including ownership, agent, payee. Summary table showing Forest Plan area, felling area, thinning area and restructuring and regeneration area in hectares.</td>
<td><strong>Text &amp; Map</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Location and background. A 1:50,000 map showing wider context and Forest Plan area. Stakeholder engagement. Grid reference of the main forest entrance.</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Long Term Vision and Management objectives.</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Woodland description.</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part B</strong></td>
<td><strong>Survey Data</strong></td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Survey the woodland to collect information on physical conditions, tree health, growing stock, biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and public access.</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part C</strong></td>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong> (refer to Forest Design Planning - A Guide to Good Practice)</td>
<td><strong>Map(s)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Updated Concept Map from the Scoping process that highlights key constraints and opportunities.</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consider aspects such as physical conditions, growing stock, biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and public access and existing grant and any felling licences.</td>
<td><strong>Illustrations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In visually sensitive areas, undertake a landscape character analysis including perspectives from agreed viewpoints to consider the visual impact of felling and replanting.</td>
<td><strong>Map</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Environment impact map (if requested).</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part D</strong></td>
<td><strong>Management Proposals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outline silvicultural policy and management prescriptions. Include strategies to address the issues identified during the analysis stage. Consider felling, restructuring, new planting, protection, tree health, maintenance, biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and public access.</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Felling and Restructuring. Use 1:10,000 maps (larger scale only where appropriate for clarification around sensitivities) to show the following:</td>
<td><strong>Map</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Felling map by 5 year felling phases for 20 years using colour (see Forest Design Planning Guide). Areas where you are seeking 10 year felling approval need to be accurately mapped. Map should show compartment and sub compartment areas. Show any areas that will be felled permanently (ie woodland removal).</td>
<td><strong>Map</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Restructuring map that shows separation of successor crop types by colour. Restructuring for first 10 years to be accurately mapped and give replanting year. Indicate the planting year of stands adjacent to the replanting areas.</td>
<td><strong>Map</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thinning map that shows all areas to be thinned in the first 10 years.</td>
<td><strong>Map</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Schedule of felling, restructuring and thinning areas. For Forest Plans over 100 hectares this data should be provided via the production forecast template.</td>
<td><strong>Table</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agreed operational tolerances for amendment purposes.</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other Forest Operations – summarise other management work for the first five years.</td>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part E</strong></td>
<td><strong>Production Forecast</strong></td>
<td><strong>Excel spreadsheet</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Supply basic crop data to feed into the Private Sector production forecasting exercise. An Excel spreadsheet template is available from the Forestry Commission Scotland website <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/wighelp">www.forestry.gov.uk/wighelp</a></td>
<td><strong>Excel spreadsheet</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The main components of the Forest Plan

Part A – description of woodland

Property details
This should include the name and address of the owner, the agent dealing with the Plan and the Payee to whom grants will be paid. These details will be used to make the Forest Plan contract for grants and the felling licence.

Location and background
This should;

- give a brief description of the area covered by the Plan including number of woodlands. In particular this should set the Plan area in the context of the surrounding environment as well as the features actually contained within the Plan area. Include a summary table showing area of Forest Plan, area to be felled, area to be thinned in first 10 years and area to be restocked.
- provide details of any existing grant schemes and felling licences.
- give the Forestry Commission reference numbers and the date the agreement was made. If a scheme has been completed and the contract has expired, it is not necessary to identify it separately.

Stakeholder engagement
This should summarise the stakeholder engagement and conclusions arising from Scoping. Any issues that arose since the completion of Scoping should be covered. Include the Scoping Report as an Appendix.

Long term vision and management objectives
This should describe the long term vision for the woodland and set out the management objectives.

Areas of different woodland types such as native woodland and conifer plantation may need distinct objectives.

Site and species description
Describe the current woodland cover in terms of species, age, area and yield class including open ground. Information such as geology, soils, windthrow hazard class or exposure indices might be useful to include in this section where the information is important to support your planning decisions. This information is often best to be presented as tables and charts.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
If your proposals include woodland creation, road, quarry building or deforestation then we will make a determination under the 1999 EIA Regulations as to whether you will require consent under these regulations. Details on EIA Regulations can be found on our website at www.forestry.gov.uk/glscotland under the grants and regulations section.

What to show on the maps for Part A
Location map at 1:50000 scale to show the woodlands in their wider setting. Identify any major local features such as other forests and woodlands, large water bodies, special landscape, recreational sites, major access routes etc and any linkages with your woodland.
Identify the area to be brought into the Forest Plan. If there are several owners show clearly the different ownership boundaries and annotate the map with their names. Each owner must apply separately to get approval.
Part B Survey data
Summarise any survey data that you hold, such as aerial photographs, tree health, soil and conservation surveys. Ensure you record the source and date of the survey and where any full survey data is kept. If there are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) on your woodland property, include a copy of the Site Management Statement.

Part C Analysis of the Information
This is an important part of the Plan and it is critical that this stage is done correctly. You should use the information gathered during the scoping exercise and the survey of the woodland to develop a clear long term plan for the woodland. This should include using the information from the updated Concept Map produced at Scoping.

A Plan produced from inadequate analysis of the site will not be useful long term and will not get our approval. We will expect the analysis to be thorough and the rationale for your management decisions to be clear.

Where a forest is visible in the landscape and a landscape character analysis is required we will expect this to be carried out as described in Forest Design Planning - A Guide to Good Practice. Perspective illustrations should be done to show how the woodland will look during and after the restructuring process. These visual effects are best illustrated using panoramic photographs.

Part D – Management Proposals
Silvicultural policy
State the silvicultural policy for the woodlands. This should accord with the objectives of management. You should set out the prescriptions to be employed for operations such as felling, thinning, type of low impact silvicultural systems (LISS), restructuring regeneration, new planting, protection, tree health

Guidelines, data sources and policy documents to help you prepare your Forest Plan
There are a number of documents that give good background information and that will help you prepare a Forest Plan (see Appendix 2)
- UK Forestry Standard and associated Forestry Guidelines
- Indicative Forest Strategies (IFS)
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Native Woodland Survey of Scotland
- Historic Environment Information and Advice
- Rationale for Woodland Expansion
- Policy on Control of Woodland Removal

What to show on the maps for Part C
- Concept Map: This is an updated version of the Concept Map produced during the Scoping exercise and provides a summary of the constraints and opportunities specific to the Plan area (see Section 2 Scoping report).
- Environmental Impact Map: If required, it should give accurate detail of the scale and location of any proposed activities for afforestation, deforestation, road building and quarrying for approval which fall within the scope of the Forestry Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and therefore require determination on the need for an EIA.
and biosecurity, maintenance, biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and public access.

For LISS areas, you should provide a description of the type of LISS system(s) to be used and clearly differentiate areas that are undergoing “LISS - thinning” from areas of “LISS - final felling”.

Protection and maintenance should include a description of the significance of rabbit, squirrel, deer or other herbivore activity and the measures to control them.

Tree health should be monitored and results incorporated into management planning together with measures to prevent the introduction and onward spread of tree pests and diseases through appropriate biosecurity procedures (see Appendix 2 iii).

Biodiversity includes issues such as management of native and ancient woodlands, UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats and Species, management of open ground, encouragement of shrub layer, management and control of invasive species such as rhododendron (please refer to Forestry Commission Scotland guidance on ‘Forest Plans and Rhododendrons), management of deadwood; management of woodland grazing and browsing.

Historic environment includes aspects such as ancient monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes, historic buildings and designed landscapes.

Landscape includes how the woodland will contribute towards the character of the local landscape and ameliorate any visual impacts.

What to show on the maps for Part D

Use 1:10,000 scale maps or a map with a scale that is suitable to illustrate the felling and restructuring proposals. Felling areas should be shown on a separate map to restructuring proposals.

Felling and thinning map

- Show the next 20 years felling in 5 year blocks using colour coding as shown in Table 2. Clearly indicate on the map the first 10 years of felling for which approval is being sought.
- Do not use black hatching as an alternative to block colours as it can hide detail. Use fine boundary lines and clear labels instead. The result must be unambiguous and clear and should relate directly to your Felling/Thinning schedule.
- Show the type of felling for each coupe eg CF=clearfelling, LISS=low impact silvicultural system (only show LISS areas that will be actively worked during the plan and show final felling LISS areas under each felling phase).

Restructuring regeneration map

On another map clearly show the successor crop types and year of replanting for the felling areas for first 10 years of replanting.

Use colour coding shown in ‘Table 3’. For any species not identified in the Table, please use a separate colour and identify species eg Douglas fir as XC – DF.

Also indicate the planting year of stands adjacent to the replanting areas.
Public access includes issues such as community interests and improvement of the recreational experience, footpath construction and recreation infrastructure and interpretation.

**Felling and Restructuring**

The UK Forestry Standard recommends that adjoining crops should not be felled before restocked crops have reached an average of at least 2 metres in conifer crops.

Special attention should be given to the visual impact of clearfelling especially in sensitive areas (see Part C). In your plan, consideration should also be given to mitigate the visual impact of tree harvesting residues following felling operations as these can have a significant impact on both the scenic quality and amenity value of a local landscape.

**Other Forest Operations**

You should give a brief summary of work envisaged for the first five year phase.

**A Restructuring Regeneration Schedule**

There is a presumption that felled areas are replanted. Your plan must give a clear description of your plans including stocking densities. Management of natural regeneration areas and your strategy if such areas fail. In addition to a map showing successor crops, the species, area and replanting year must be included as part of your Production Forecast data.

**Tolerances**

Because of the longer period over which you have approval to carry out the work it is likely that you will need to make changes to the planned work. To reduce the need for amendments, we have set out working ‘tolerances’ - See Table 4. These working tolerances will set agreed limits, within which you will have some flexibility in how you carry out the work. They are an essential component of a Forest Plan as they will form part of the felling permission but they

### Table 2 - Required colours for felling phases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Felling phase</th>
<th>Colour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Years 1-5</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Years 6-10</td>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Years 11-15</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - Years 16-20</td>
<td>Light green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinning</td>
<td>Dark green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1st 10 years only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low impact silviculture</td>
<td>Lilac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>system thinning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1st 10 years only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland removal</td>
<td>Dark brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long term retention</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3 - Required colours for successor species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Colour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sitka spruce</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Light blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse conifers*</td>
<td>XC-NS</td>
<td>Dark blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway spruce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse conifers*</td>
<td>XC-L</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse conifers*</td>
<td>XC-SP</td>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scots pine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed broadleaves</td>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Dark green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native mixed broadleaves</td>
<td>NMB</td>
<td>Dark brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caledonian Scots pine</td>
<td>SPC</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural regeneration</td>
<td>NR-Species</td>
<td>Purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open ground</td>
<td>OG</td>
<td>Grey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For any species not identified in the Table, please use a separate colour and identify species eg Douglas fir as ‘XC–DF’. 
cannot in any way be interpreted or used to override the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard.

You must discuss the tolerances for your plan with Conservancy staff before your draft plan is finalised. We will agree what is appropriate for inclusion in your Forest Plan and you must prepare a table showing what has been agreed.

**Windblow**

Where windblow occurs you must contact your local Conservancy Office who will approve clearance of windblow and any associated standing trees by exchange of letters. A map showing the location and extent of windblow will be required but there will be no requirement to enter this felling onto the public register.

Where windblow is extensive (greater than 20 hectares or 50% of coupe area) a formal plan amendment will be required.

Windblown areas must be replanted according to the agreed restructuring regeneration map.

**Part E – Production Forecast**

We are interested in getting an improved forecast of timber production from private woodlands. Forest Plans are an ideal way of assisting in this process. For all Forest Plans, you must give basic crop data covering felling and thinning for the first ten years for all woodland areas over 100 hectares. This data will be used in the Private Sector production forecasting exercise. The format is linked to the Forestry Data Transfer Standard and is a simple MS Excel spreadsheet downloadable from our web at [www.forestry.gov.uk/wighelp](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/wighelp)

Send the completed Excel spreadsheet electronically to your local Conservancy Office along with your Forest Plan. A production forecast based on this information will be provided to you. A revised Excel spreadsheet will be required, if there is a formal amendment to adjust felling periods or felling coupe boundaries.

Updated data will be required at the mid term review.

---

### Summary

- Prepare an updated Concept Map. This should include any new information as a result of the Scoping Meeting.
- Carry out a survey of the woodland to collect information on the physical conditions, tree conditions, growing stock, biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and public access.
- Undertake an analysis of the information including a landscape character analysis, if required, to develop a clear long term plan for the woodland.
- Set out the main management prescriptions for the woodland.
- Ensure your maps are clear and accurate.
- For all Forest Plans provide basic crop data for production forecasting using the customised Excel spreadsheet from our web site.
- Discuss any issues with your Case Officer.
## Applicant’s Guidance

### Strategic Forest Plans - applicant’s guidance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjustment to felling period*</th>
<th>Adjustment to felling coupe boundaries</th>
<th>Timing of Restocking</th>
<th>Changes to species</th>
<th>Changes to road lines</th>
<th>Designed open ground **</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FC Approval normally not required</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fell date can be moved within 5 year period. Where separation or other constraints are met</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 ha or 10% of coupe area – whichever is less</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 2 planting seasons after felling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change within species group eg evergreen conifers or broadleaves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of temporary open ground eg deer glades if still within overall open ground design</td>
<td>Increase by 0.5 ha or 5% of area - whichever is less</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Approval by exchange of letters and map** | | | | | |
| 1.0 ha to 5 ha or 10% of coupe area – whichever is less | | | | | |
| Additional felling of trees not agreed in plan | | | | | |
| Departures of > 60m in either direction from centre line of road | Increase of 0.5 ha to 2 ha or 10% - whichever is less | | | | |

| **Approval by formal plan amendment may be required** | | | | | |
| • Felling delayed into second or later 5 year period | • Advance felling into current or 2nd 5 year period | > 5 ha or 10% of coupe area | Over 2 planting seasons after felling | Change from specified native species | More than 2 ha or 10% |
| • Advance felling into current or 2nd 5 year period | | | | Change between species group | Any reduction in open ground in sensitive areas |

**Note**

* Felling sequence must not compromise UKFS advice on adjoining crops. Felling progress and impact will be reviewed against UKFS at mid term review

** Tolerances subject to an overriding maximum of 20% open ground

---

Table 4 - Tolerance table

| Environment | Economy |
Section 4: Approving your Forest Plan

Consultation and Public Register

When we are content with the Forest Plan and that it meets the UK Forestry Standard we will consult with local authorities and other statutory consultees. Full details on our consultation arrangements can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland.

The statutory bodies have 4 weeks to consider the Forest Plan and let us have their comments.

During this 4 week period details of the Forest Plan are placed on our Public Register and during this time anyone may provide comments on the Forest Plan.

Where felling or new planting is not being carried out then consultation is not required.

If we receive comments or other information about the application we will discuss these with you.

Once the Plan is approved, you should notify the people who attended the scoping meeting that the Forest Plan is now finalised and that a copy of the plan is available for viewing at your address/office or the local Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy Office.
Section 5: Forest Plan 5 year review and 10 year renewal

5 year review
We will formally review your progress against the Forest Plan in the fifth year of the contract. We will ask for a record of your progress and arrange a site meeting. We also visit at other times to see how the Plan is progressing.

We will review in detail the progress of felling and restructuring regeneration and assess this against the UK Forestry Standard. Access to Restructuring Regeneration and Restructuring Felling grants for remainder of the Forest Plan period will depend on the timing intervals between adjacent felling coupes being achieved.

Appendix 3 shows a Decision Tree for the Mid Term Review.

10 year renewal
Once your Forest Plan reaches 10 years, we would expect a new Forest Plan to be prepared that would cover the next 10-20 years. This is a major timeline and it is important to consider the following:

- what has and has not been achieved in terms of major operations such as thinning, felling and restocking within the existing Forest Plan.
- the management objectives in going forward. Are these broadly similar or is there a major change in direction due to owner aspirations?
- are there any new constraints or opportunities?
- the need for scoping. This will generally be required but will depend on how much change has taken place and future plans.
- the requirement for any surveys to update woodland information and mapping.

You are advised to discuss the renewal of your Forest Plan with Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy staff well in advance of the 10 year stage to ensure a smooth transition.
Section 6: Further advice

Further advice on applying and preparing a Forest Plan can be obtained by contacting our staff at your local Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy Office.

**Highlands & Islands Conservancy**
Woodlands, Foddertry Way
Dingwall
Ross-shire
IV15 9XB
01349 862144
(for Highland, Western Isles, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands Councils)

**Grampian Conservancy**
Ordiquhill, Portsoy Road
Huntly
AB54 4SJ
01466 794542
(for City of Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils)

**Perth & Argyll Conservancy**
Algo Business Centre
Perth
PH2 0NJ
01738 442830
(for City of Dundee, Perth & Kinross, Clackmannanshire, Stirling, and Argyll & Bute, Fife (part) Councils)

**Central Scotland Conservancy**
Bothwell House
Hamilton Business Park, Caird Park
Hamilton
ML3 0QA
01698 368530
(for North Ayrshire, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, North & South Lanarkshire, City of Glasgow, East & West Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, East, Mid- & West Lothian, City of Edinburgh, and Fife (part) Councils)

**South Scotland Conservancy**
55-57 Moffat Road
Dumfries
DG1 1NP
01387 272440
(for Scottish Borders, Dumfries & Galloway, South Ayrshire and East Ayrshire Councils)
Appendix 1: Approved SFGS Forest Plans and Rural Development Contracts

1. Approved SFGS Forest Plans and Restructuring Payments

Before you carry out the restocking

You must first notify us about the restocking that you intend to carry out. To do this, send an SFGS/FP4 claim form with the details of the areas you would like to restock with a map that clearly shows these areas. We will compare these details with the Forest Plan and formally agree the proposals with you. Once we have done that, you can carry out the restocking and make a claim.

What you can claim

If the area that you are restocking was approved for felling under the SFGS Forest Plan then you can claim grant at a single grant rate per hectare equivalent to those currently available for restructuring felling and restructuring regeneration, under Rural Development Contracts – Rural Priorities. You can claim grant as a single capital payment following replanting or when natural regeneration physically occurs.

The grant rates are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restructuring species</th>
<th>Rate per hectare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sitka</td>
<td>£520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other conifers*</td>
<td>£654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed broadleaves</td>
<td>£820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native broadleaves</td>
<td>£905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caledonian Scots pine</td>
<td>£833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural regeneration**</td>
<td>£520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note - * includes Sitka spruce produced by vegetative propagation from seeds derived from controlled pollination in ‘Parents of Families’ in the tested category.
** Natural regeneration can only be claimed once the natural regeneration is established.
How to make your claim
You must be IACS registered and have been allocated a Business Reference Number. Send your completed SFGS/FP4 to your local Conservancy office with a map.

When we receive your claim, our Conservancy staff will check it in the normal way and may inspect the work. Once the claim is authorised for payment the data about the claim is shared with SGRPID who will validate the Business Reference Number and Field Identifiers and then cross check the claim against any other grants that are being claimed on the land.

Advice is available about how to ensure your claim gets through these SGRPID checks: see Claiming Legacy grants. If your claim successfully passes these checks then payment will be issued by SGRPID through the Scottish Executive Accounting System (SEAS). You should use the following Operation Codes on your claim form based on gross area (ie including any open ground up to 20%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operational code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8800</td>
<td>Restructuring with Sitka spruce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8801</td>
<td>Restructuring with other conifers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8802</td>
<td>Restructuring with mixed broadleaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8803</td>
<td>Restructuring with native broadleaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8804</td>
<td>Restructuring with Caledonian Scots pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8805</td>
<td>Restructuring with natural regeneration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Expiry of your SFGS Forest Plan
Once a Forest Plan expires and a new Forest Plan has not been agreed, any further felling will require a Felling Licence. Restructuring Felling and Restructuring Regeneration grants must be applied for through Rural Priorities.
Appendix 2: Guidelines, data sources and policy documents to help prepare a Forest Plan

The following range of data sources and policy documents will help you prepare a Forest Plan. Further information on each can be obtained by following the relevant links.

i. Guidelines

The UK Forestry Standard and its associated Guidelines act as the foundation for sustainable forestry in all parts of the UK. The UKFS is agreed by all of the Governments within the UK and links international obligations on sustainable forest management with policies on implementation. It therefore sets the context for forestry policy and practice in Scotland.

The UKFS and guidelines apply to all woodlands/forests. As part of the current revision of the UKFS, seven guidelines will be published covering:
- Biodiversity;
- Climate Change;
- Historic Environment;
- Landscape;
- People;
- Soils; and
- Water.

Further information on all aspects of the UKFS is available at www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs

ii. data sources and tools

Indicative Forestry Strategies (IFS)

IFSs provide a focus for local authority responses to consultations on grant scheme proposals and inform those developing proposals for forestry of possible sensitivities when considering options for planting. IFS, where available, should be obtained via local authorities.

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

An approach to understanding the differences between landscapes, and can serve as a framework for decision-making that respects local distinctiveness. Covering all regions of Scotland, some thirty LCAs have been prepared by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). Besides collectively describing over 360 distinct landscape character types throughout Scotland, they also usually identify potential ‘forces for change’ on
the landscape, and provide associated summary guidance on managing such change. This usually includes the ‘force for change’ and associated guidance issues that should be considered when looking at the contribution forest and woodland management and expansion decisions make to a local landscape. Advice on LCA and copies of all regional LCAs are available at: www.snh.gov.uk/policy-and-guidance

Review the relevant LCA for your Forest Plan area and read the general sections of the report that apply to the entire LCA area; these will provide you with essential background and contextual information for your landscape. Review and consider the landscape character type landscape description, forces for change and associated guidance; there are usually relevant sections on forest and woodlands.

Incorporate this information in the forest design planning process for your Forest Plan, specifically when developing the landscape character analysis for your Forest Plan.

**Historic Environment Information & Advice**

This booklet is a guide to the resources available to forest and woodland managers relating to the historic environment of Scotland. It has been designed as a route map to the most pertinent available information and advice.

Web link to www.forestry.gov.uk/histenvpolicy or www.forestry.gov.uk/fcspolicies

**Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS)**

A comprehensive survey of all of Scotland’s native woodlands and the data from the survey which may be helpful in preparing native woodland plans.

The survey is based on a digitised woodland map of Scotland and using field survey collects data on a range of woodland attributes. These attributes include woodland type (National Vegetation Community (NVC) and Habitat Action Plan (HAP) type), generic woodland type (whether the wood is semi natural or planted), species composition and structure, herbivore impact, deadwood and threats and damage. The data is collated to provide an assessment of woodland condition and can be analysed to ascertain the conservation value of the woodland.

The data is currently being collected and the project will complete in 2013. Prior to this, data will be available for certain geographical areas on a rolling programme from 2009/10 onwards. More information about the schedule for data availability and accessibility is available on the Forestry Commission Scotland website: www.forestry.gov.uk/nwss.
iii. policy documents and guidance

Woodland Expansion Strategy
www.forestry.gov.uk/woodlandexpansion

The Woodland Expansion Strategy lays out the Scottish Government’s thinking on how woodland expansion can best increase the delivery of public benefits from Scotland’s land.

Control of Woodland Removal
www.forestry.gov.uk/woodlandremoval

Describes the policy direction for decisions on woodland removal in Scotland.

Pests and Diseases
www.forestry.gov.uk/pestsanddiseases
Appendix 3: Forest Plan 5 year review process

Does the standard and progress of the work match (or is within agreed tolerances of) the approved Forest Plan?

Yes

Are there any significant changes to the management objectives and/or agreed work in the remaining five years of the plan?

Yes

- Formal Plan amendment required with revised maps
  - Maps and Forest Plan
  - Consultation and entry on Public Register

No

- FP Contract may be terminated

No

- Approval by exchange of letters
  - Work continues as originally approved Forest Plan
Appendix 4: Administration process after Forest Plan approved

**Applicant**
- Forest Plan /Existing Plan approved by Case Officer
- Case Officer signs plan

**Conservancy administration**
- Prepare index of documents contained in plan and attach to front of plan
- Annotate with dates for 5 year review and set resumption
- Complete Forest Plan data capture spreadsheet
- Scan map and complete map scanning form (FCS GIS 1)
- E-mail Geo-Information Services
- E-mail production forecast spreadsheet to forestplansforecasts@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

**Conservancy send applicant**
- Signed Forest Plan/Existing Plan
- Letter of approval
- Felling licence
- Felling certificate

**For Forest Plans only**
- Applicant can now submit WIG claim preparing the plan
- Applicant notifies those who made comments or attended the scoping meeting that the plan has been approved
Forestry Commission Scotland serves as the forestry directorate of the Scottish Government and is responsible to Scottish Ministers.

Contact

Forestry Commission Scotland
National Office
Silvan House
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT

Tel: 0131 334 0303
Fax: 0131 314 6152
E-mail: fcscotland@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Web: www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland

If you need this publication in an alternative format, for example, in large print or in another language, please contact:

The Diversity Team
Forestry Commission
Silvan House
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT

Tel: 0131 314 6575
E-mail: diversity@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Published by - Forestry Commission Scotland - March 2013
ISBN - 978 0 85538 844 7
© Crown Copyright 2013

All photography from Forestry Commission Picture Library unless otherwise stated
Designed by Design and Interpretative Services, Forestry Commission Scotland, Edinburgh
FCFC134/FC-S(DIS)//PDF/MAR13