

Project Proposal

Business Reference Number:		FGS Case Number: (if known)	
Application name:	Heriot Mill woodland creation		

Introduction

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

The Operational Plan, including the issues log at Annex 2, can be used to record any pre-application work completed ahead of submitting your woodland creation application (e.g. discussions with stakeholders, site assessment results, etc.).

The Woodland Officer 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 Forestry Grant Scheme 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 Scottish Forestry (SF) [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.

Business Details

What type of entity is the business that is applying for grant?

To assist us monitor who is benefitting from our grant schemes, we would ask that you select one of the following business types that best describes your business entity:

- Farm Business – Owner
- Farm Business – Tenant
- Crofter – including Crofting/Grazing Committees
- Forestry Business
- Investor – including Private/Trusts/Pension Funds
- Mixed Rural Estate
- Small-scale Forestry Owner (your woodland ownership is less than 20ha)
- Conservation Company/Charity/NGO/Carbon Investor
- Developer
- Temporary Owner

Please select your most appropriate Business Type from the dropdown list:
Investor - inc. Private/Trusts/Pension Funds

General Assessment

The information in your Operational Plan should be based on a thorough assessment of the site. Please complete the following:

Describe the management objectives for the site.

- Establish a commercial woodland which meets the criteria set out within the forestry grant scheme, whilst also supplying the demands of future timber markets. This will be made achievable through careful planning and appropriate woodland management.
- Ensure the woodland preserves and enhances local and national conservation, alongside biodiversity objectives. Particular attention should be paid to sensitive areas, such as riparian zones, and habitats identified as valuable for key species.
- Consideration should be made to landscape design, ensuring the woodland design fits with the local area on both the regional and wider landscape scale.
- Include public access in the design to provide the opportunity to enhance public health and well-being through access to the woodland.

Provide a description of the planting site.

The main area of woodland creation is Cpt 1 which is located above Roughsware wood, an existing and well-established conifer woodland. It is through Roughsware wood that access will be gained to the new woodland being proposed.

The landform of this area is rolling and largely exposed. There are some areas of improved land, but the majority remains unimproved with an elevation between 320-410m.

The open landscape is being considered for a wind farm development, and a habitat survey has been completed for that purpose. The result of the habitat survey helped to determine the 'footprint' of the woodland creation area. For instance, keeping away from bog habitats of importance and away from core areas of curlew and other waders, and wrapping around the northern edge of Roughsware wood itself.

Compartment 1 is located to the north of Roughsware wood, whilst Cpt 2 and 3 indent into the main mass of the existing woodland. Both are improved fields that lack in any biodiversity value.

The soils composition of the proposed woodland area is gley/ peaty gley with pockets of ground water terrestrial ecosystems (GWDTE). These areas of GWDTE have been excluded from planting.

A probe over the proposal area confirms the Scotland environment map - Peaty gley and brown earth, derived from Lower Paleozoic greywackes and shales.

It is proposed that the site will be planted under the 'Diverse Conifer', 'Low density native woodland' and 'Native Broadleaves' options, with an overall species composition of:

- Sitka spruce (2,500/ha)
- Douglas Fir (2,500/ha)
- Scots pine 50% /Norway Spruce 50% (2,500/ha)
- Scots pine 80% / Aspen 20% (2500/ha)
- Broadleaves for timber production (2,500/ha)
- (Beech 50% and Sycamore 50%)
- Native broadleaves (30%) (1,100/ha)
- (Rowan 10%, willow 20% birch 50%, hazel 5%, hawthorn 5%, aspen 10%)

See components table for breakdown of areas and proportions for each option.

Within the forest design, designed open ground and native broadleaves have been assigned to areas where they can provide high ecological and aesthetical benefits. For instance, on the woodland boundary where they can create a robust and diverse edge for bird life.

Within the western, more visible areas of Cpt 1, the blend of native species provides valuable riparian habitat. This adds significantly towards enhancing the wider landscape, as well as providing a screen between the public and the commercial forestry further into the woodland.

This can also be seen in Cpt 3, near the main access road into Roughsware, where proposed mixed broadleaf planting links in with native planting proposed in the Roughsware forest plan.

Secondary conifer species have been selected and located to provide visual diversity; both from afar and internal vistas. Diverse conifer compartments will either be planted in single species blocks, or in group mixtures. Where mixed conifer compartments are situated, these can be actively thinned to open the canopy. This will encourage ground flora and tree form, which will help overall stability and final crop tree selection. These compartments will also screen core productive Sitka areas and add habitat interest to native and low-density areas on the lower slopes.

An attractive water fall feature will be left in open space and enriched with low density native broadleaves outside its buffer.

Key areas for open ground, native woodland and secondary conifer species:

- Wet flushes (GWDTE) and water courses. Designed open ground and native broadleaves will improve riparian zones through enhancing water quality.
- Designed open ground has been used to protect the existing agricultural structure and historical setting of stone dykes. This can be used as internal rides for future roads and coupe boundaries, fire breaks and access for both management and public usage into the future.
- Landscape sensitive edges, such as in Cpt 3 adjacent to the entrance to Roughsware wood and on the western boundary of Cpt 1.

Deer fencing will be used in the far north of the new planting and in the Cpts 2 and 3 to protect the diverse conifers and broadleaves. The area of Cpt 1 closest to Roughsware wood will be stock fenced to protect the young trees from the neighbouring livestock.

Tree protection for broadleaves within the deer fence is to be by vole guards, whilst out with the fence will be 1.2 tree shelters. This will be supported by vermin control until the trees are fully established.

Provide details of discussions with neighbours, local communities and consultees. For Community Councils and neighbours please evidence who was contacted, date and method of contact used (e.g. meeting, leaflet drop, letter etc.) Where reasonable, you may just identify street names (e.g. larger urban areas).

A letter drop took place 3/7/2023 to all the landowners and property holders in the area. A total of 28 letter drops were undertaken between 9am and 2.30pm.

Included in the letter drop was a breakdown of proposed species, a list of key elements such as water and wayleaves, public access, timber transport, cultural heritage, landscape, time scale and a concept map.

An email pre-consultation was undertaken on 6th Feb 2023, at 10.52am with Scottish Borders Council archaeology, ecology, roads, landscape and outdoor access. Further organisation contacted included Scottish Forestry, Historic Scotland, Strategic Timber Transport, RSPB and CC.

You must carry out a site-based assessment of soil and vegetation to match species choice with the particular site. Refer to [\(ESC-DSS\)](#) during this process.

List the site surveys undertaken to inform tree species selection. For example: soil survey, soil depth survey, vegetation survey.

Surveys undertaken include:

- Soil assessment- Detailed review of soil types, their fertility and moisture regime. This information allows site specific decision making as regarding the development of appropriate woodland types and anticipated performance.
- Vegetation assessment - Initial assessment of vegetation was undertaken at the time of the soil assessment, this evaluated vegetation communities and the corresponding woodland type/species that would be considered appropriate.
- Ecological survey was completed for the windfarm development covering a much larger area and was used to determine the area of least environmental impact for woodland creation, primarily near the existing Roughsware wood.
- GWDTE assessment- Undertaken as a part of the ecological survey but also at a local level during project development and probing of soil depth. GWDTE areas have been included within the design as OG or OL.
- Breeding Bird Survey – Undertaken as a follow up to a similar survey for the wind farm, it double checked the footprint area of the woodland creation. To ensure the results complemented each other, the surveyor for both assessments was the same.
- Archaeology Survey – Desktop checks, constraints checks from SF, and a thorough walk over found no features of interest.
- Landscape appraisal –The impact upon the landscape has been considered primarily from the west end of the project area, as it was deemed the most visually sensitive. As a result, the mixed species design is focused at this location.
- Walk over assessment/desktop appraisal – undertaken by the forestry agent. This allowed an onsite appreciation of soils, vegetation, topography, landscape sensitivities, key view points, features of interest within the site, public access appreciation, protection from deer, rabbits, hares, ground preparation methods, future coupe boundaries and fire breaks, future roading and timber stacking area, riparian and drain issues to consider and how likely the proposals would develop on the ground as a whole.
- This assessment was developed further through a desktop analysis which included additional factors and their associated constraints and opportunities. and using google earth pro to create a 3d visual of the proposal from which the mapping process starts.

Please indicate the climatic suitability of the site for the tree species you have chosen. Use the [Scottish Forestry Map Viewer](#) - see the 'FGS Climatic Site Suitability' data.

The following information displays the approximate percentage of the climatic suitability per species in reference to where they are proposed to be planted.

Sitka spruce – 100% suitable

Douglas fir – 70% suitable 30% marginal – located where considered suitable.

Norway spruce – 60% suitable 40% marginal – located where considered suitable.

Scots pine – 70% suitable and 30% marginal – located where considered suitable.

Native broadleaves – W4 – 20% suitable 80% very suitable.

Native broadleaves – W7 – 40% suitable 50% marginal.

Native broadleaves – W11 – 20% suitable 80% marginal.

Broadly, all productive conifers fall within the suitable range. Where species do fall within the marginal category, they will be planted as part of a mixture, or with careful consideration as to placement when in a single species block.

ESC has been consulted as to the most advantageous mixtures, and it suggested mixtures of SP/MB and SP/NS, as together these would increase stability and provide a greater climate change resilience.

Woodland Strategy: Describe how your proposal fits with the Local Authority woodland strategy.

The Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy separates opportunities for woodland expansion into 5 different landscape types. The proposal area falls into the 'Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills', Landscape Character Type.

The whole site falls within the Upland/ Upland Fringe type FWS, where it is designated as 'potential', thereby securing the higher grant rate.

Issues to be addressed include:

- (1) **Scale and mass of planting to adhere to Forest standard guidelines** – fitted to site.
- (2) **Ground cultivation minimise ground disturbance** – continuous mounding.
- (3) **Consider effects on local employment** – not applicable but local to the Scottish Borders.
- (4) **Consider opportunities for diversification of the local economy**- not applicable.
- (5) **Local road network considered** – existing forest road to be extended, and all timber to come down to consultation route as for the main Roughside wood.
- (6) **Maximise species diversity to reduce monoculture** – achieved. With the majority planted within a deer fence and located where visibly beneficial.
- (7) **Ensure the community has been engaged** – full pre consultation and letter drop.
- (8) **Maintaining integrated habitat networks** – strengthened and protected existing habitats and bog areas excluded, riparian zone robustly protected.

In areas where wildfire is a risk to the woodland describe how you will address the risks and how this has been considered in the woodland design. Refer to [Building wildfire resilience into forest management planning](#) for information.

The area is not deemed to be at significant risk of wildfire. There is little human source, such as areas of notable unsupervised recreational value, within the nearby vicinity of the proposal area. Furthermore, the scheme design - areas of NBL, rides, forest roads and main roads, will assist as natural fire breaks.

Within the larger landscape, neighbouring forests are few in number and limited to small coniferous shelter belts. This demonstrates a low risk of wildfire from neighbouring land.

The applicant acknowledges the risk associated with fire and will ensure this risk is appropriately managed.

If applying for the productive conifer options please use the Timber Transport Forum – [Agreed Routes Map](#) and confirm the sites timber route classification i.e. agreed, consultation, severely restricted, excluded or no classification.

The road to the south of the site, the B709, is classified on the Timber Transport Forum website as a consultation route.

As timber from Roughsware has historically been hauled along this route, there is already a good working relationship between Scottish Woodlands and the SBC roads department.

SBC roads have been pre-consulted, and as of time of writing, no feedback has been received. A forest plan has been developed for the adjacent Roughsware wood and a timber transport management plan approved (TTMP). Enquiries will be made to ascertain whether the same TTMP can be applied to this proposal.

If applying for the Native Woodland options please use the 'Native Woodland Habitat Network' map in the 'FGS Target and Eligibility' folder on the [Scottish Forestry Map Viewer](#) and describe the habitat network zones your application is within i.e. primary, secondary or out with the habitat network.

The application lies outwith the habitat network zones.

Sensitive Areas & Potential Impacts

Sensitive Areas:

- National Nature Reserve or Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- National Park
- World Heritage Site
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- National Scenic Area
- Natura sites – Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Area of Conservation (SPA)
- Land on which there is a Nature Conservation Order
- Deep peat soil

Potential Impacts:

- Population & Human Health
- Biodiversity
- Land, Soil, Water, Air, Climate
- Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, Landscape

List any **Sensitive Areas** and any **Potential Significant Impacts** relating to your site, including appropriate mitigation (**refer to Annex 1**). Detail any surveys completed to inform this assessment.

*For complex cases the Issues Log (**Annex 2**) can be used to record this instead.*

(Scotland's Environment Web Land Information Search

<https://www.environment.gov.scot/maps/land-information-search/> is a useful resource which may help you identify some of the constraints within your site).

Only one significant sensitivity impacts upon the woodland creation and that is the presence of black grouse and curlew to the north and west of Cpt 1. As a result, the deer fence facing these areas will have black grouse markers at 300mm spacing, to increase visibility and reduce black grouse collisions.

Lower level impacts include:

- Design changes to improve the landscape and woodland edge with low density broadleaves (LDB) to create valuable habitat for birds and other species.
- Significant increase in species diversity in areas where it will create valuable habitat and improve the overall landscape impact of the woodland for the public.
- Buffering of GWDTE and riparian zones with OG, NBL, LDB as suited to the site.
- Badger gates will be added where it proves necessary and self-funded.
- Selection of NMB species as advised by Nature Scot and ESC.

- The waterfall within the planting scheme will be given additional visual interest with LDB and OG in that area. No fences will be erected so as not to restrict public access at that location.
- Access gates and pedestrian gates included to ensure existing public access is not restricted.
- Appropriate type of ground preparation will be used to achieve required stocking densities.
- Deer fencing will be used to secure diverse mix, but stock fencing will be retained in the main Sitka area.

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.

Ground Preparation: Describe the method that you will use, including dimensions. Where you propose multiple ground preparation techniques then you must identify these on a map.

The aim is to provide a suitable planting location for tree establishment and growth while minimising visual and hydrological impacts.

The majority of the ground preparation will be undertaken by continuous moulder. This will produce a mound of approximately 30x30cm, the depth of the mound will vary depending on soil types although it is generally 20-30cm deep. Where the continuous moulder cannot operate, due to slopes and vegetation, mounding will be undertaken by an excavator.

Excavator hinge mounding will also be used in areas of native broadleaved and low-density native planting to create variable stocking and spacing densities. This will allow an appearance of a more natural woodland structure. Furthermore, in areas too steep for machinery, hand-mounding or screefing will be undertaken.

No cultivation will be achieved through ploughing.

The use of mounding will reduce ground disturbance, creating a positive impact in terms of reducing carbon emitted from the soils during establishment. Mounding will present less diffuse pollution constraints than other methods of ground preparation, whilst providing optimum micro site conditions for newly planting trees.

Across the site, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

- The woodland has been set out in discrete coupes, separated by rides, which will facilitate the development of windfirm edges
- No mechanical excavation will take place within 10m either side of the water pipes or watercourses that serve private water supplies, or within 50m of any private water supply intakes
- Prior to works commencing, all features of known archaeological interest within 20m of the site boundary will be marked out, by a qualified archaeologist if necessary, and these features will be protected during all operations
- Prior to works commencing, all water pipes, water intakes and associated buffer zones will be marked out and protected during all operations
- There will be no fertiliser or herbicide applications within 50m of watercourses that serve private water supplies, within 50m of any private water supply intake.
- No mechanical works will take place within 20m of active badger setts (identified active sett lies within an area of existing young planting)

Drainage: Identify any existing drains/watercourses and provide information relating to new drains.

Where pockets of impeded drainage occur, the creation of new drains will be considered to limit the risk of windblow in the future.

If, upon implementation, it is deemed that localised flat areas will require drainage work to assist in tree establishment, all operations will comply with the 'Forests and Water' guidelines (5th Edition). Specifically:

- Existing drains may be cleaned out as required to restore their functionality
- New drains will not exceed 2 degrees angle of slope
- New drains will terminate short of watercourses
- Drain ends will be channelled upslope at their termini
- Silt traps will be constructed to prevent sediments reaching the watercourses
- The drainage system will be constructed to avoid having any detrimental impact on areas of deep peat, sensitive habitats, private water supplies and features of archaeological interest
- Drainage works will be completed in tandem with other ground preparation works

Protection: Describe how the site will be protected. For example: fencing, tree guards/shelters and pest management.

Append 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).

Fencing:

Deer fencing with added rabbit netting is proposed around the western end of Cpt 1 and around Cpt 2 and 3. This will not only protect softer conifers and native broadleaves from browsing and potential losses, but also safeguard the quality of timber produced in the Sitka spruce crop too. This will significantly reduce the need to use tree shelters in an exposed location, reducing plastic as well as significantly reducing the maintenance time that tree shelters entail.

Other areas with a majority of Sitka spruce will have stock fence and rabbit net. All gates will be fitted with rabbit netting. Where the existing stock fence appears adequate for the next 5-8 years of life, then a rabbit net will be added to protect the trees from hares, reducing cost.

Broadleaf protection:

Vole guards will to be added to all broadleaves within the deer fence enclosure to ensure early development, both in the native areas and MC/MB areas.

Broadleaves out with the deer fence will be protected with 1.2 tree shelters.

A tidying up plan is proposed at year 10 or sooner to remove redundant tree shelters and vole guards once the trees are securely established.

Please consult the Capital Items Map to view the proposed fencing and other protection placements.

Animal Management:

A robust deer management strategy will be implemented to ensure regular deer surveillance and control is undertaken.

The assumption is that badgers will seek access, but no obvious tracks have been noted. Therefore, during and after fence construction, if signs of a badger presence are found, a self-funded badger gate will be added as required.

Access by neighbouring sheep will be controlled via the deer fence. The condition of the deer fence will be monitored to ensure continued protection. If any defects in the fence are found, these will be repaired.

Planting; please provide the following:

- Species to be planted and percentage of each. (Please use the components area table to record hectares planted).
- Describe the nursery stock and planting method to be used.
- Confirm if you will be planting vegetatively propagated Sitka spruce.
- For native woodland creation specify the [Seed Source Zone](#).

The site will be planted under the 'Diverse Conifer', 'Native Broadleaf' and 'Low Density Native Broadleaf' options. The breakdown for each grant option is below:

Native Broadleaves				
Grant Specifications	Species	Area (ha)	%	Notes
NMB 85 - 100	NMB	1.52	100	
Total		1.52	100	

Woodland Creation Diverse Conifer				
Grant Specifications	Species	Area (ha)	%	Notes
Main Conifer Species 40 - 75%	SS	36.4	58.16	
Other Conifer Species 10 - 40%	D Con	14.36	22.94	Includes split of SP/Aspen (80/20)
Productive Broadleaves	MB	0.27	0.43	Beech and Sycamore
NMB 5 - 10%	NMB	5.95	9.51	Includes split of SP/Aspen (80/20) and NMB/OG (50/50)
OG 0 - 10%	OG	5.61	8.96	Includes split of NMB/OG (50/50)
Total		62.59	100	

Low Density Native Broadleaves				
Grant Specifications	Species	Area (ha)	%	Notes
NMB 85 - 100	NMB	0.325	100	
OG	OG	0.325		
Total		0.65	100	

Mixed species compartments will be comprised of:

Diverse Conifer Option	Total Percentage across the site	Species Choice and Percentages						Planting Density
MC		Scots Pine (50%)	Norway Spruce (50%)					2500 ha
SP/Aspen		Scots Pine (80%)	Aspen (20%)					2500 ha / 1600 ha
MB		Beech (50%)	Sycamore (50%)					2500/ha
NMB		Rowan (10%)	Willow (20%)	Birch (50%)	Hazel (5%)	Hawthorn (5%)	Aspen (10%)	1600/ha
OG								

Mixtures

Scots pine and aspen will be planted in a group mixture of up to 50 per group. This mix is intended to be thinned and offer a landscape structure that compliments areas of NMB.

SP/NS is intended to be thinned and so will need to be planted in single species groups of up to 50 per group.

Native Broadleaf	Species Choice and Percentages						Planting Density
NMB	Rowan (10%)	Willow (20%)	Birch (50%)	Hazel (5%)	Hawthorn (5%)	Aspen (10%)	1600/ha

Low Density Native Broadleaf Option	Species Choice and Percentages						Planting Density
NMB	Rowan (10%)	Willow (20%)	Birch (50%)	Hazel (5%)	Hawthorn (5%)	Aspen (10%)	500/ha

Low density NMB planted in clusters to create clumps on pockets of deeper soils at variable spacing from 0.5m – 12m

NMB will be sourced as local as possible, but ideally 109, 204, 203 provenance. Aspen is traditionally difficult to source and if there is a significant variation from this proposal, Scottish Forestry will be notified.

Only high-quality nursery stock will be accepted. Trees will be planted using the 'L' or 'T' notch method with quality checks by the woodland manager to ensure trees are firmly secured into their planting position.

Maintenance: Describe the maintenance regime for the site (e.g. monitoring, weeding, beat-up, etc.).

Ongoing surveillance will ensure the woodland develops as expected and will provide the opportunity for potential issues to be picked up early. Surveillance and beat-up surveys will assess mortality and outline any required remedial works; this will ensure the proposal meets the criteria set within the FGS.

Walkover assessments will be undertaken periodically throughout the year with a view of building a knowledge base of the entire site. Surveys will assess key criteria such as mortality, health, vigour, and damage. This will build up a detailed understanding of the required maintenance program for specific locations across the site.

Beating will likely take place over the initial 2-4 years of the woodland's establishment. Weeding will be assessed as the scheme develops and will be tailored to site requirements. The maintenance program will ensure robust action is taken where necessary and a high-quality scheme is maintained.

Fences will be checked for gaps and repaired where required. Vermin will be monitored and removed. Self-funded badger gates may be required and added during ongoing monitoring.

At a predicted date of yr 10, deer fences will be reviewed and potentially reduced to stock fence height. Likewise, any vole guards and tree shelters will be assessed and removed.

Fertilisation: Where applicable, describe the proposed fertiliser regime e.g. application rate, timing, etc.

It is not anticipated that fertiliser will be required, as on-site analysis by the forest manager and analysis through the ESC, will allow prediction of the yield classes.

Other: Please include any other silvicultural detail here.

Public access

The site is not generally suited to public access, but gates have been included that offer public and bridle as well as management access.

A wide range of rides have been integrated into the woodland design. The forest rides link with each other to provide a network of routes which can be utilised for recreational purposes now and into the future.

Small Woodlands Loan Scheme (woodlands up to 50 hectares only)

Please read this section if you are interested in receiving a loan based on the capital items in your FGS contract. To confirm your interest in receiving a Loan, you must sign the declaration at the foot of this section.

The Small Woodlands Loan Scheme (SWLS) is designed to assist landowners in implementing woodland creation projects by releasing early capital. The following thresholds apply:

- The maximum Woodland Creation proposal size, approved in your FGS contract, eligible for loan support is 50 hectares and we will pay you a Loan of 50% of the value of the capital items in your FGS contract (not including CSGN supplement values where this is present), rounded up to the nearest £100, up to a maximum value of £40,000 per FGS application.
- To be eligible for a Loan payment, the maximum Woodland Creation proposal grant value, approved in your FGS contract, must be no greater than £250,000.

The loan is recovered by deducting the value from your FGS capital claim.

If both your FGS and Loan applications are successful you will be provided with a loan offer that will detail the value of the loan and set out the terms of the loan. You will be required to sign and return the loan agreement with your FGS contract to accept the loan offer. By signing here you are expressing an interest in receiving a loan however funding is not guaranteed. Funding will be committed at FGS contract approval and is dependent on available budget at that time.

If you wish to be considered for a loan, please first read the SWLS guidance on our [website](#) and then sign the following declaration:

- I/we are applying for a Small Woodlands Loan on the capital items contained in the FGS application associated with this Operational Plan
- I/we confirm that our woodland creation proposal is less than 50 hectares
- I/we confirm that we have no Small Woodlands Loan Scheme agreements active at this time
- I/we confirm that should I/we be successful in obtaining a Loan, then I/we will only make one claim for our FGS capital works which, in accordance with FGS terms and conditions, will be once all the capital works, as laid out in the FGS contract's schedule of works, have been completed.
- I/we understand that by signing this declaration, I/we am/are only stating that I/we am/are interested in receiving a loan and, as such, meet all the eligibility criteria required as laid out in our guidance and our Loans terms and conditions.
- I/we understand that by signing this declaration, I/we acknowledge that my/our success in receiving a loan is subject to the funds available in any given year and should there be no dedicated funding available for the SWLS, I/we will continue with the FGS application and will fund the capital works of that application under the terms and conditions of the FGS.
- I/we have the necessary consents/permissions to sign this loan application declaration as evidenced on the administrative system, RP&S, to which this Operation Plan and associated FGS application relates.

Woodland Creation Operational Plan

- I/we have read, understand and hereby acknowledge that Scottish Ministers may use any of my personal data contained in or relating to this loan application in accordance with the terms of [Scottish Forestry's privacy notice](#) and the [Rural Payments and Services Privacy Policy](#).
- I/we, on behalf of the business applying for both a FGS application and a Small Woodland Loan, hereby sign this declaration:

Signed:	n/a	
Print:		
Date:		
Would the project have gone ahead without a loan? Please delete as appropriate. (this will not affect your application for loan)	YES / NO	

Please do not sign this declaration if you do not wish to apply for the SWLS, but please continue to complete the other sections as these are required for your FGS application. Currently all correspondence relating to the SWLS will be via email. Please ensure the email address held in RP&S is correct prior to submitting your application.

Ends section on SWLS

Annex 1

Assessment of Potential Impact

Please use the following guidance to assist with describing any potential significant impacts and any mitigation which is proposed:

- **Population & Human Health:** Detail any discussions which you have had with neighbours, local communities or other stakeholders and explain how this has influenced your proposal. Explain what public access is currently undertaken on the site and what provisions you plan to make to continue or improve this in adherence with the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#).
- **Cultural Heritage:** 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 including any effects from erosion and compaction.
- **Water:** Detail the nature of the likely impacts on water bodies or water supplies from your activities and how you will mitigate these impacts.
- **Air:** Detail the nature of the likely impacts on air quality or the impacts on light provision.
- **Biodiversity:** Detail the nature and extent of high value habitats such as those listed on the [Scottish Biodiversity List](#) and describe how you will protect these habitats. Detail the nature of the likely impacts on wildlife from your activities and how you will mitigate these impacts. Refer to [European Protected Species](#) for guidance.
- **Landscape:** Provide details of how the impact on the landscape has been assessed and how the application has been designed to minimise any impact.
- **Climate:** Provide details on the vulnerability of the project to climate change and how this impact was mitigated.
- **Land:** 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? 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 in the further information and technical guidance section of the [FGS woodland creation](#) web page.
- **Material Assets:** Identify and describe all built and natural assets that are relevant to the site, and which could be adversely impacted by the proposal e.g. utilities, minerals. Describe any mitigation proposed for these features.

Annex 2 Issues Log

Issue (include date and raised by)	Applicant's Comments	FCS Comments	Agreed Mitigation	Status (Open, Closed)	Significance of Impact (High, Medium, Low)
<i>e.g. Archaeology – Scheduled Monument at NS123456. HES, 23/10/16.</i>	e.g. Scheme design includes OG to buffer Scheduled Monument as per UKFS. John Smith, 25/10/16	e.g. Applicant has taken on board HES feedback and designed the scheme in accordance with best practise. Susan Jones, 27/10/17.	e.g. 20 metre OG buffer around SAM.	e.g. Closed	e.g. Low
Population & Human Health					
	See separate issues log				
Cultural Heritage					
Soil					
Biodiversity					
Landscape					
Material Assets					
Water					
Air					
Climate					
Land					