

Scottish Borders Council
Woodland Creation Advice Note
March 2019



Scottish Borders Council Woodland Creation Advice Note:

This advice note is to aid applicants on what type of information is required in respect of the various specialist topic areas for which the Council is a statutory consultee. It aims to direct applicants as to where that information is available, as far as possible on a 'self-help' basis.

It should be read in conjunction with the Woodland Creation Applicant Guidance, and the Woodland Creation Application Guidance – Supporting information (February 2018), both of which were produced by Forestry Commission Scotland (now Scottish Forestry) as well as Council policy contained in the Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy (2005) and the Technical Advice Note (2012)

As set out in the Woodland Creation Application Guidance – Supporting information (February 2018), two main information and evidence collection processes should be utilised for preliminary investigation:

- i) **Desk based assessment** of existing data sources (specialist groups, online maps and reference sources) and ii) **Ground truthing**

Desk Based Assessment

To assist with the desk based assessment, the table below sets out the relevant data sources / information (by topic area) that Scottish Borders Council require when consulted by Scottish Forestry on any new woodland creation application/proposal; it also sets out where that information can be easily accessed.

Topic Area	Data or Information Type	Source/Location of data or information	Additional Guidance
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notable species and Habitats of Conservation Concern Black grouse conservation in southern Scotland Land Use Strategy (LUS) pilot: Opportunities to safeguard biodiversity (High/Medium/Low value) & to deliver multiple benefits (Natural Flood Management, Diffuse pollution control, soil carbon) UK Forestry Standard 	<p>The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC) (report of the biological records including SBL list) http://www.wildlifeinformation.co.uk/</p> <p>Black grouse strategy (GWCT 2016) : https://www.gwct.org.uk/media/641731/black-grouse-in-southern-scotland.pdf</p> <p>LUS mapping tool: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20013/environment/723/biodiversity/5</p> <p>https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/the-uk-forestry-standard/</p>	<p>TWIC can provide a report of the biological records for a proposed planting site including Borders Notable species and habitats of conservation concern. This includes species and priority habitats listed on the Scottish Biodiversity List, Habitats Directive Annex 1 habitats and Annex II and Annex IV (European Protected Species). The black grouse strategy identifies key areas for black grouse within Scottish Borders. Careful location and design of new woodland may be required in these key areas.</p> <p>The LUS pilot maps can identify sites of high biodiversity value that may require safeguarding but also areas where multiple benefits may accrue from woodland creation.</p> <p>UKFS applies to all sites. Refer to section 6.1 Biodiversity. Consider location and design of new woodland with respect to the forest habitat network and open habitat networks (guidelines 4 and 8).</p>

Topic Area	Data or Information Type	Source/Location of data or information	Additional Guidance
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="439 169 931 264">SBC Historic Environment Record (HER); CANMORE/Pastmap; Historic Land Use Assessment (HLA) <li data-bbox="439 384 741 408">UK Forestry Standard 	<p data-bbox="954 169 1514 336">Consult SBC HER (chargeable at £65/hour); Pastmap and Canmore can be accessed at https://canmore.org.uk / https://pastmap.org.uk ; HLA can be viewed at http://hlamap.org.uk</p> <p data-bbox="954 384 1514 624">All designs and plans should be compliant with the UKFS: Forests and Historic Environment. The key guidance is the Forests & Historic Environment note produced by Scottish Forestry https://forestry.gov.scot/publications/68-forests-and-historic-environment-information-and-advice/viewdocument</p> <p data-bbox="954 671 1514 839">Please also Visit https://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/strategy-policy-guidance/historic-environment for a range of guidance on forestry and the Historic Environment in Scotland.</p> <p data-bbox="954 887 1514 1094">There is also a highly recommended training course on identifying and managing archaeology in forestry at https://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/strategy-policy-guidance/historic-environment/training-course.</p>	<p data-bbox="1536 169 2110 376">SBC's HER and Historic Environment Scotland's CANMORE database (best viewed through PASTMAP) contain information on designated and undesignated archaeological features, sites, buildings, designed landscapes and battlefields within the landscape.</p> <p data-bbox="1536 424 2110 1382">Please note, Historic Environment Records and CANMORE are only a snapshot of available evidence on Historic Environment. There are many more sites and features that have not been recorded but nevertheless require protection or recording. For this reason, specialist analysis, interpretation and survey is often required in the design process for compliance with the UKFS. Desk Based Assessments and Walkover Surveys are best conducted by archaeologists working to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standards. Desk Based Assessments and Walkover Surveys are recommended for all woodland schemes over the EIA threshold. Walkovers are also recommended for those schemes under the threshold where the potential for unknown archaeology has been identified through the Desk Based Assessment process. Consult the SBC HER for known site extents, existing reports on investigations, paper records, and new information. Pastmap provides an archived snapshot of point based information (<i>note the points should not be taken as known site extents</i>); HLA provides a high level over-view of past and present land regimes as they survive in the landscape.</p>

Topic Area	Data or Information Type	Source/Location of data or information	Additional Guidance
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="434 165 741 193">• UK Forestry Standard <li data-bbox="434 528 913 555">• Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy <li data-bbox="434 708 857 767">• Borders Landscape Assessment (1998) <li data-bbox="434 815 882 874">• National Scenic Areas (Eildon and Leaderfoot & Upper Tweeddale) <li data-bbox="434 995 837 1023">• Local Landscape Designations <li data-bbox="434 1176 904 1235">• Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes <li data-bbox="434 1356 871 1415">• Survey of Gardens and Designed Landscapes (2008) McGowan 	<p data-bbox="949 165 1514 225">https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/the-uk-forestry-standard/</p> <p data-bbox="949 528 1496 624">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/download/411/planning_guidance_woodland_strategy</p> <p data-bbox="949 708 1503 767">SNH Review 112 -The Borders landscape character assessment Scottish Natural Heritage</p> <p data-bbox="949 815 1518 948">https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/safeguarding-protected-areas-and-species/protected-areas/national-designations/national-scenic-areas</p> <p data-bbox="949 995 1473 1128">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/directory_record/20043/local_landscape_designations/category/28/approved_planning_guidance</p> <p data-bbox="949 1176 1509 1308">https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/gardens-and-designed-landscapes/</p> <p data-bbox="949 1356 1509 1457">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/directory_record/25265/survey_of_gardens_and_designed_landscapes</p>	<p data-bbox="1536 165 2112 480">Applies to all sites. Refer to section 6.4 Landscape. In most upland and upland fringe sites, landform is the main landscape influence and UKFS landscape guidelines 15 – 22 are particularly relevant. Consider visibility from potentially sensitive ‘receptors’ such as houses, roads, footpaths and viewpoints.</p> <p data-bbox="1536 528 2112 660">Applies to all sites. Identify relevant category of opportunities for woodland expansion in Appendices 1-5 and address any relevant sensitivities.</p> <p data-bbox="1536 708 2112 767">Applies to all sites. Identify relevant landscape character type (s) of site.</p> <p data-bbox="1536 815 2112 916">Applies to designated sites. New woodland should not detract from the quality or character of the landscape.</p> <p data-bbox="1536 995 2112 1096">Applies to designated sites. Refer to relevant Special Landscape Area management recommendations.</p> <p data-bbox="1536 1176 2112 1235">Applies to designated sites. Refer to UKFS guideline 11</p> <p data-bbox="1536 1356 2112 1415">Applies to designated sites. Refer to UKFS guideline 12</p>

Topic Area	Data or Information Type	Source/Location of data or information	Additional Guidance
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Development Plan Policies or Site Allocations 	Scottish Borders Local Development Plan https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/ldp	Other advice and guidance including Planning Briefs for development sites is also available on the Councils website at: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20051/plans_and_guidance
<u>Material Assets</u> <u>Core Paths & Rights of Way</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Paths, Rights of Way and recorded wider path network and Water Access Points Specific record of Scotland's Great Trails. 	Core paths, Rights of way and wider path network and Water Access Points. Mapping at Find-it Map Advanced* https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/mapadvanced Mapping of Scotland's Great Trails is on OS map layer within this mapping.	Further detail of some routes and how promoted in the local area. Paths around booklets/other - available to download at www.scotborders.gov.uk/walking
<u>Material Assets</u> <u>Roads Infrastructure /</u> <u>Routes to Market</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitability of local road network to facilitate future timber extraction Will timber need to be loaded from the roadside? Are road improvements necessary, e.g. provision of passing places or edge strengthening and can the industry contribute to this work? 	The Timber Transport Forum (https://timbertransportforum.org.uk/) supports forestry by ensuring that the timber industries can access forests and market timber in a sustainable way while at the same time seeking to minimise the impact of timber transport on the public road network, on local communities and on the environment. An Agreed Route Map (https://timbertransportforum.org.uk/maps/agreed-routes) for timber traffic has been developed by timber transport groups at local authority level. N.B. Agreed Routes status does not necessarily mean that a route is suited to any size and volume of traffic. Two important Good Practice Guides by The Timber Transport Forum are: Managing Timber Transport Good Practice Guide 2012 (https://timbertransportforum.org.uk/attachments/article/24/TTF%20Publication%202012%20Good%20Practice%20Guide.pdf);	Need to consider the potential impact on both the local road infrastructure and the surrounding community. Timber should only be extracted from the forests using agreed timber haulage routes. With regards to new planting, where this is in close proximity to an existing public road, all planting must be such that it does not interfere with driver visibility. This will include junction visibility and forward visibility. All new planting should be a minimum 5m from the edge of the existing carriageway. Any new access, or alterations to an existing access, must be completed to the Council's satisfaction by a Council approved contractor. Planning Permission may be required where the access is onto a classified road. All works must account for the impact of surface water on the public road.

Topic Area	Data or Information Type	Source/Location of data or information	Additional Guidance
<u>Material Assets</u> <u>Roads Infrastructure /</u> <u>Routes to Market</u> continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	and Loading Timber from Roadside Forests 2016 (https://timbertransportforum.org.uk/attachments/article/24/Loading%20timber%20from%20roadside%20forests.pdf)	Any roadside stacking/loading should only be carried out where facilities are not available within the site and following consultation with the Council's Traffic Section.
<u>Population and Human Health</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Impacts (see notes re Core paths and Rights of way under material assets above). 	Social Impacts (see notes re Core paths and Rights of way under material assets above).	Social Impacts (see notes re Core paths and Rights of way under material assets above).
<u>Water / Flood Control</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEPA Flood Hazard Maps UK Forestry Standards SEPA Natural Flood Management Handbook 	<p>SEPA Flood Hazard Maps http://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm</p> <p>The UK Forestry Standard https://www.forestryresearch.gov.uk/research/the-uk-forestry-standard/</p> <p>SEPA NFM Handbook https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/163560/sepa-natural-flood-management-handbook1.pdf</p>	<p>Contact Scottish Borders Council, Flood and Coastal Management Team</p> <p>Contact Scottish Forestry</p> <p>Contact the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)</p>

*It should be noted that Scottish Borders Council 'Find-it' tool, which is available on the Scottish Borders Council website allows mapping and data to be explored; with the Map Advanced version (<https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/mapadvanced>) allowing for more complex mapping system that enables the viewer to view and interrogate a range of complex datasets, of which many will be required for the forestry application process. A user guide for the tool is available at the following webpage: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20015/your_council/660/find_it_-_user_guides/3

Ground Truthing

Biodiversity:

Ground-truthing to assess potential impacts is likely to be required where biodiversity of greater than local importance is identified. A proportionate Ecological Impact Assessment should be carried out <https://cieem.net/resource/guidelines-for-ecological-impact-assessment-ecia/>

Birds survey required where significant numbers of breeding & wintering wading birds or wildfowl, black grouse or significant sites containing schedule 1 raptors may be affected by the proposal. Depending on location, most surveys will be for breeding waders and black grouse, but those affecting important roosts and feeding grounds for geese and swans may also require surveys. Further details may be available via the updated Scottish Ornithologist Club Bird Atlas for South East Scotland (published in 2018). Surveys for European Protected Species (bats, otter and great crested newt in Scottish Borders) and protected mammals may be required adopting FCS guidance. The Council has Technical advice notes for Planning including otter survey guidance: <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/technicaladvicenotes>

Core Paths & Rights of Way:

Forest plans to show Core paths, rights of way and other access routes integrated into the Constraints maps.

Opportunities to enhance existing outdoor access to be listed in forest plans.

Detail of design to confirm continued non-vehicular access by the public on forest tracks and open ground.

Design to include information on access (where this is possible) to features of interest within the forest plan area.

Ground truthing continued

Cultural Heritage:

The UKFS recommends archaeological site walkovers to further inform design and mitigation. This is particularly relevant for large scale schemes, and those in upland or rough grazing areas. It is recommended that for schemes over the EIA threshold a walkover survey is necessary. For those under this threshold, we recommend consideration is given for a walkover in areas of upland and rough grazing where archaeological survival is greatest but where survey may have been minimal in the past.

How to use your information

Biodiversity:

The process should follow a preliminary ecological appraisal <https://www.cieem.net/guidance-on-preliminary-ecological-appraisal-gpea> to determine what sensitive ecological receptors are present and what further survey may be required. This may include, depending on site and scale of proposal, an NVC survey or Phase 1 survey with target notes of priority habitats and species, from the Scottish Biodiversity List (Categories: *Conservation action needed*, *Avoid negative action*, *Watching brief only*) <https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/scottish-biodiversity-list>.

Material Assets including Core Paths and Rights of Way:

Early discussion with Scottish Borders Council Outdoor Access team will facilitate coordinated working. This should be mutually beneficial for updating of signage in relation to existing routes and any necessary diversions.

Flood Prevention:

Consider the effects of any planting on the flood plain in built up areas by inadvertently increasing flooding through flow diversion or slowing down flows;
Consider how woodland creation on the flood plain would affect adjacent land in relation to flooding, erosion etc.
Consider how woodland creation could increase the potential for Natural Flood Management in the upper catchments above built up areas;
Consideration of the wider benefits that woodland creation may have e.g. diffuse pollution control, water quality improvement, increased biodiversity.

For further information on these topics please contact:

Biodiversity	Ecology Officer	01835 826514	ecology@scotborders.gov.uk
Cultural Heritage	Archaeology Officer	01835 826622	archaeology@scotborders.gov.uk
Landscape	Landscape Officer	01835 825148	LandscapeConsultations@scotborders.gov.uk
Land Use	Planning Officer	01835 825255	localplan@scotborders.gov.uk
Core Paths and Rights of Way	Senior Ranger	01835 826750	outdooraccess@scotborders.gov.uk
Roads	Roads Planning	01835 826639	placeroadsplanning@scotborders.gov.uk
Flood Protection	Flood Management Team	01835 826701	FloodRiskEPlan@scotborders.gov.uk

Last updated: 17.05.19