

The provision of archaeological information and advice in Scotland to meet the UKFS

Obtaining information and advice in regard to the historic environment to inform protection and conservation measures in Scotland's forests and woodlands is important.

Following the **UKFS Forests and Historic Environment** guidelines, historic environment features and sites of special cultural significance should be identified and appropriate measures taken to protect them. Where relevant, a professional archaeological walkover survey may be required to inform decisions and provide baseline evidence (particularly in advance of a new woodland creation). Issues raised during this process shall be considered and evidenced within the Forest Plan.

Identifying opportunities to promote access, conservation management and presentation of significant historic environment assets within a Forest Plan is also important.

Woodlands containing or adjoining notable historic environment or ecological features may attract large numbers of visitors. Enhancing and / or maintaining public access, conservation management initiatives and presentation for significant features should be included within forest planning and considered a key element of attracting public grants.

Guiding principles

There is a difference between archaeological advice sought as a pre-forestry application consultation and as a statutory consultation. The preparation and submission of forestry proposals including woodland establishment, Forest Plans and Forestry and Land Scotland Land Management Plans should follow these guiding principles in regard to the historic environment:

- **Proposals should evidence the archaeological information and advice obtained by the applicant.** Where appropriate, the provision of archaeological information and advice (including desk based assessment; archaeological walkover survey that identifies and categorises significant archaeology; and the identification of conservation management recommendations) should be done by professional archaeological consultants and included within the proposal, enabling the subsequent formal consultation to be a relatively standard action.

An individual charged service may be offered by some Local Authority Archaeology Services (payable by the applicant) to provide advice on (a) the requirement for archaeological survey to meet UKFS *Forests and Historic Environment* requirements; (b) the significance of identified historic environment assets; and (c) to check the draft proposal and offer targeted management recommendations. Historic Environment Scotland may also be approached in regards to providing management advice in relation to designated historic assets and their setting. While evidence of pre-submission Local Authority Archaeology Services consultation would reassure the Scottish Forestry (SF) Woodland Officer, it will not always be deemed necessary by the SF Conservancy if there is clear evidence that the UKFS *Forests and Historic Environment* guidelines have been followed.

- **Following statutory consultation** by SF Conservancy, organisations such as Historic Environment Scotland (in regards to designated historic assets) and the relevant Local Authority Archaeology Service may offer further comment (free of charge).

These guiding principles build on the existing best practice of obtaining professional archaeological advice (including conservation management advice) prior to woodland establishment (particularly in unimproved upland with high archaeological potential). In areas of improved ground (enclosed and ploughed agricultural land) or restored ground (post quarrying) a simple walkover survey by forestry staff using all available historic environment datasets should suffice.

What sort of archaeological survey may be required?

The most commonly used archaeological survey techniques are:

- **Desk-based assessment** – the identification of known or potential historic environment sites through examining existing records.
- **Prospective survey** – survey undertaken to locate and define upstanding historic environment sites. Surveys can take a variety of forms: the targeted inspection and definition of known sites; the prospective survey of ground of high potential to locate previously unidentified sites; and the comprehensive inspection of all ground covered by a proposal.
- **Protective and detailed survey** - survey undertaken to support agreed design solutions such as: a final walkover survey to mark out significant archaeological remains within the proposal and fully check the area identified for planting; or a detailed measured survey to record the landscape prior to planting.

When is an archaeological survey required?

Establishment

Consideration of the historic environment must precede any new planting on an area of ground previously unplanted with trees. However, there are levels of response appropriate to different conditions.

- In **unimproved upland areas** (and areas with a high density of archaeological features previously recorded), a professional archaeological survey may be required. It is likely that a *comprehensive prospective archaeological survey* will be required in open moorland or previously unimproved areas.
- In **lowland areas** previously under an improved agricultural regime (i.e. intensively ploughed) a desk based assessment using Pastmap and the relevant Historic Environment Record and a walk over survey by the applicant may suffice.

Felling and Restocking

Felling, thinning, ploughing, mounding, restocking and stump harvesting will all have a potentially damaging effect upon surviving historic environment features. Consideration of the historic environment must precede any harvesting and restocking operations. However, there are levels of response appropriate to different conditions.

- In **previously unimproved areas** such as upland moorland and pasture, ancient and semi-natural woodland and areas with a high density of archaeological features previously recorded, a professional archaeological survey may be considered appropriate in some cases, as the likelihood of surviving archaeological structures is much higher. *Predictive prospective archaeological survey* could be used in afforested areas (and previously afforested areas), concentrating upon those areas within which archaeological features are known or considered likely.
- In **lowland areas** previously under an improved agricultural regime (i.e. intensively ploughed) a desk based assessment using Pastmap and the relevant Historic Environment Record and a walk over survey by the applicant may suffice.