

Ditch Blocking – Plastic Piling Dams

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For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#) .

Aim

The aim of this scheme is to benefit peatlands and wetlands including moorland, lowland bogs and fens by keeping the surface (both the vegetation and the peat) as wet as possible.

Blocking ditches or grips will hold and slow the flow of water raising the water table back to natural levels and allow the vegetation, particularly sphagnum moss, to regenerate. It is important that all drains within the hydrological unit are blocked.

Eligibility

Any land is eligible.

You must combine this capital item with one of the following management options, unless you have prior approval otherwise from NatureScot:

- [Lowland Bog Management](#)
- [Moorland Management](#)
- [Wetland Management](#)
- [Management of Buffer Areas for Fens and Lowland Bogs](#)

Application requirements

You must prepare a ditch blocking plan.

You must identify the number and location of all proposed new dams on a map and record the widths of all ditches you propose to dam.



[Ditch Blocking Plan \(MS Word, Size: 124.7 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/AECS-Ditch-Blocking-Plan-template---Oct-2023--2-.docx> [Plan template]

All the ditch blocking must be completed by year two of the contract.

If you apply for Ditch Blocking for peatland restoration you will need approval from your planning authority, under the Prior Notification and Prior Approval process.

Requirements

- each individual dam must be watertight
- dams must be no more than 30 metres apart and ideally placed every 15 metres
- the dam must extend well into the banks of the ditch, and the full dam width must be at least twice that of the ditch as recorded in your plan
- you must record the location of each created dam on a map
- you must maintain a diary

Payment

You can claim:

- £62.00 per dam up to one metre wide
- £151.00 per dam more than one metre, but less than two metres wide
- £385.00 per dam greater than two metres wide

You may apply for payment on an actual cost basis for this item if the work you are proposing to carry out will benefit the notified features of a designated site, and where there are exceptional circumstances.

Inspections

The inspectors will check:

- the location and extent of the work
- each individual peat dam is watertight
- dams are no more than 30 metres apart
- the dam must extend well into the banks of the ditch, and the full dam width must be at least twice that of the ditch as recorded in your plan
- you have recorded the location of each created dam on a map
- you have maintained a diary

Additional guidance

[Supporting guidance is available for this item.](#)

Recent changes

Section	Change
Application requirements	Updated ditch blocking plan template

Previous versions

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