

Construction of Forest Road

Date published: 7 October, 2024

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

This cost is for the construction of a new forest road where it meets the objectives of the [Forest Infrastructure](#) option. This item is only eligible for accessing small, unmanaged woodlands of less than 50 hectares in size. Woodlands over 50ha which also include areas of native woodland (as shown on the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland) not producing timber may be eligible as long as the productive woodland area is less than 50ha.

The road should use suitable material that is well graded and durable stone that will not readily break down under wheel loading that may then cause diffuse pollution.

The minimum road specification below is based on the Forestry Commission Standard Road Specification which can be found in Annex 1 of the Timber Transport Forum guide: [The design and use of the structural pavement of unsealed roads 2014](#).

Please review this for the full road specification.

Forest road:

- felled width: 25 metres average
- road width: 3.4 metres running width
- maximum gradient: < 8 per cent preferred, up to 10 per cent acceptable, short lengths (< 200 metres) up to 12.5 per cent
- minimum gradient: two per cent except over short sections on crests and sags

Ensure that you minimise disturbance of peaty soils and consider landscape impacts. A roadside ditch must be provided on the uphill side of the road or on both sides where the road is at or below the adjacent ground level.

Drains must have a depth of not less than 150 millimetres below the formation edge and a longitudinal gradient of not less than two per cent. Ditches and drains shall not lead directly into watercourses.

If tree clearance is required you must have an approved [felling permission](#) prior to starting work.

Forest roads and quarries [may need consent](#) under the Forestry Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

Please discuss this with Scottish Forestry during the application process. In addition, you may need to get further permission from your local planning authority.

Any groundwork adjoining a public road (A, B, or C categories) and up to 25 metres from the public road will require planning permission.

If your application includes the construction of forestry tracks (private ways), prior notification to the local planning authority will also be required.

As this is a new regulatory requirement (2014) further guidance and final arrangement are still to be confirmed. Please discuss with your local conservancy office or local planning authority.

Further information

Please ensure you abide by conditions set out in the Forestry Grant Scheme claim form and guidance.

- Forest Research Technical Note: [Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from forest civil engineering](#)
- Timber Transport Forum: [The design and use of structural pavement of unsealed roads 2020](#)
- Timber Transport Forum: [Good practice guides](#)
- [SEPA – Diffuse pollution](#)
- [Protecting and Managing Water in Forests](#)

Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)

[Download guidance](#)

Click 'Download this page' to create a printer-friendly version of this guidance that you can save or print out.