

Forest Infrastructure

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Aim

This option provides support for new access infrastructure that will bring small scale, undermanaged woodlands or inaccessible woodlands back into active management with the following aims:

- to improve the economic value of forest and woodland through timber production
- to increase the area of woodland in Scotland that is in sustainable management
- to improve the environmental and social benefits of woodland

This option is limited to woodlands of up to 50 hectares in size except in cases where low-level water crossings are being replaced.

Grant support

Grant support is available for a number of capital grant operations associated with new forest infrastructure. The capital grant operations available are:

Capital grant operation	Payment rate
Construction of forest road (up to 500m) with on-site material	£25.80 per linear metre
Construction of lay-bys, turning areas, and loading bays	£6.60 per square metre
Bell-mouth junction	£32.40 per square metre
Replacement of low level water crossings	tbc

Application rounds

One application round will be run each year with a closing date of 31 January for the submission of applications. Allocation of funds will be for the same calendar year. Notification of successful applications will be made by 31 March.

You must fully prepare your application and conclude any relevant requirements such as EIA or prior notification before making your submission to the application round.

Application eligibility criteria

Your application and proposed work must comply with the UK Forestry Standard.

Land ownership

You must own or lease the land.

If you are a tenant then a [Landlord's Declaration](#) must be provided with your application. The control of the land must extend for the duration of the proposed contract.

If you are a contractual licensee then the Contractual Licence must be provided with your application. The control of the land must extend for the duration of the proposed contract.

Eligible land

You must have an approved Forest Plan for woodland areas of 100 hectares or more. For woodland areas less than 100 hectares you must have an approved Management Plan.

- Forest Plan
- [Management Plan](#)

You must have a felling licence linked to the Forest Plan / Management Plan, if required.

There must be planned timber production, such as thinning or small scale clear felling, over the next five years (this can include low impact silvicultural systems).

Access infrastructure works must conform to good forestry practice as laid out in the UK Forestry Standard and you must provide a clear methodology to demonstrate this. In particular we will look for a methodology to demonstrate the measures that you will take to minimise the potential risk to the water environment such as diffuse pollution.

You must carry out the work to the standard outlined in the specification for each item. To view the specification, click on each item in the list below. You must ensure that the completed work is maintained and is functional during the period of your contract.

The construction of access routes must be appropriate and in proportion to the size of woodland and the investment. This may mean that in small woodlands where timber volumes are small or where access is particularly difficult a forwarder / trailer route together with a loading bay may be more appropriate. The local woodland officer will assess the appropriateness of the proposal.

Other eligibility criteria

Infrastructure planning and implementation normally involves significant ground disturbance and the use of heavy machinery, so careful planning is required to avoid excessive environmental impact or permanent damage. It is recommended that you seek professional advice from an experienced civil engineer with a proven track record in woodland access infrastructure.

Forest roads and quarries can have significant impacts upon the environment and your application we will assess the application under the [Environmental Impact Assessment \(Forestry\) \(Scotland\) Regulations](#) .

You must maintain the access infrastructure as part of the forest road network and ensure that after any harvesting activity that the access infrastructure is reinstated to the condition when it was first installed.

Prior notification of forestry tracks

If your application includes the construction of forestry tracks (private ways), prior notification will be required. As this is a new regulatory requirement further guidance and final arrangement are still to be confirmed. Please discuss with your local conservancy office.

Supporting information

We need supporting information to help us assess your proposal. You must give the details as listed below using the template provided:

- brief description of the current structure of the woodland
- description of the silvicultural system(s) proposed
- breakdown of the management work expected to be carried out during the plan period

- map showing the areas of thinning and felling expected during the plan period together the proposed volume of wood to be harvested over the next 10 years
- map that clearly shows the location and type of access routes

[General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme](#)

Selection criteria

To ensure that we make the best use of the resources available in delivering the Scottish Government objectives we will assess each application using the 'selection criteria' for forestry options.

The selection criteria will be specific to each Forestry Grant Scheme option. Each application will receive a score based on the selection criteria and we will set a minimum score for each option.

How to claim

This grant is based on a number of capital items. Submit your claim once you have completed the works to the desired specification. We will inspect these items to ensure that they have been implemented to our specifications.

Refer to the capital item's minimum specification guidance to find out what supporting documentation and maps you need to supply with your capital claim.

Technical guidance

- Forest Plans
- [Management Plans](#)
- [UK Forestry Standard](#)
- the Forestry Civil Engineering Business Unit of the Forestry Commission has a [specification for forest roads](#)