Woodland Improvement Grant – Restructuring Regeneration

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Updates to last version:

- addition of scoring criteria

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Aim

This option aims to improve the biodiversity, resilience,and structural diversity of even-aged woodlands in the long term.

This will be achieved through restructuring their age and species composition at the point of re-planting following felling. Restructuring Scotland's woodlands will help deliver against the outcomes in the Scottish Forestry Strategy.

There are two prescriptions for the restructuring regeneration support.

The following aspects are relevant to both:

- open ground that is integral to the replanting design and meets the requirements of UK Forestry Standard will be eligible. However, extensive areas of open ground that are not proposed for replanting will not be eligible for support, nor will they be included within the calculation of percentage composition of the remaining eligible replanting area. Within the contract area, the maximum limit of open ground will be 20 per cent
- other factors will be considered when assessing applications against the UK Forestry Standard, including woodland structure, long-term retention, and the native species component

1. Restructuring regeneration which helps to deliver the UK Forestry Standard *

Restructuring regeneration which delivers the level of tree species diversity required under the UK Forestry Standard so that no more than 75 per cent of the approved replanting area is allocated to a single species.

This will be assessed across either:

- the approved Forest Plan areas that you will be felling within the felling approval period (i.e. phases 1 and 2), or

- the approved felling areas that you will be felling under a felling licence (supported by an appropriate Management Plan)

Woodland officers will ensure that the level of species diversification and change is moving towards UK Forestry Standard within the restructuring regeneration area covered by the contract.

2. Restructuring regeneration which adds diversity and builds resilience *

Restructuring Regeneration which delivers species diversity that goes beyond that required by the UK Forestry Standard so that no more than 60 per cent of the approved replanting area is allocated to a single species.

This will be assessed across either:

- the approved Forest Plan areas that you will be felling within the felling approval period (i.e. phases 1 and 2), or
- the approved felling areas that you will be felling under a felling licence (supported by an appropriate Management Plan)

Woodland officers will ensure that the level of species diversification and change is at least that required by the UK Forestry Standard within the restructuring regeneration area covered by the contract.

* In woodlands of less than 10 hectares and in native woods, the above proportions may be relaxed providing the adjacent land uses provide landscape and habitat diversity (see UK Forestry Standard).

Grant support

Grant support is based on the two prescriptions above. A grant for the use of improved vegetative stock for Sitka spruce is also available.

If vegetatively propagated Sitka is not selected as an option then applicants should note that improved Sitka must be used as standard.

Prescription	Standard Rate (£ per hectare)
Delivering UK Forestry Standard Woodland	300
Delivering Diversity and Resilience Woodland	550

Vegetative propagation

An additional payment of £60 per hectare will be made for areas planted with vegetatively propagated Sitka spruce. The plants must have been produced by vegetative propagation from seeds derived from controlled pollinations in 'Parents of Families' in the tested category.

If you propose to use *'Sitka spruce plants produced by vegetative propagation from seeds derived from controlled pollinations in 'Parents of Families' in the tested category'* then the site must have the capacity to achieve a minimum yield class 14.

When submitting a claim for vegetative propagation Sitka spruce, or for native trees, you must provide a nursery suppliers document which states the region of provenance, the Master Certificate Number and the total number of trees used.

Marketing and supplying Forest Reproductive Materials

Application eligibility criteria

You should check that you are eligible to apply for Forestry Grant Scheme funding before progressing.

Woodland Improvement Grant

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 Forestry Commission Scotland Management Plan or Forest Plan.

You must have Forestry Commission Scotland approval for the area you intend to fell or have already felled through either a felling licence or Forest Plan.

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Long-term Forest Plan technical guidance

Management Plan

The restructuring regeneration proposed in your application must align with the approval as stated in your Forestry Commission Scotland Felling Licence or Forest Plan.

Stocking densities, unless specified in your approved Forest Plan or Management Plan, must be a minimum of 2500 stems per hectare for conifers, a minimum of 1100 for native broadleaves / shrubs, and 1600 for other broadleaves and native Scots pine.

Supporting information

You must submit an operational plan which includes information on how you propose to successfully re-establish the woodland. You must give the details as listed below using the template provided.

Woodland Improvement Grant – Restructuring Regeneration operational plan template

This must clearly demonstrate silvicultural appropriateness, as well as ensuring site conditions have been thoroughly assessed and the most appropriate management techniques are proposed to minimise the impacts to the environment.

The operational plan must also include information such as ground preparation methods and identification of existing watercourses (as per Forest and Water Guidelines).

Please provide a map of the species composition of the area you propose to carry out restructuring regeneration on and details the inclusion of any planned tracks.

You must also supply a tabular breakdown of the restructuring regeneration component areas to show the species and areas you plan to replant.

Scoring criteria

We have set agreed financial budgets for each of the options under the Forestry Grant Scheme. In order to ensure that we make the most cost effective use of the money available and to meet Scottish Government objectives, we will assess each application using selection criteria.

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

Threshold score = 2 points

Each option within your application must meet the threshold score to be considered for approval. In achieving the threshold score, your option must score against each criterion except for additional benefit. The scores will then be used as the basis for allocating funding on a competitive basis through the Forestry Grant Scheme clearing process.

Delivery of option benefits

1 POINT – applications that meet the eligibility requirements but do not deliver any of the benefits detailed below.

3 POINTS – for applications that provide one or more of the following in addition to meeting the eligibility requirements:

- for applications that propose to maintain or increase the productivity of the woodland. Minimum stocking density must be: 2,500 stems/hectare for conifers and 1,600 stems/hectare for broadleaves, except for the 5 to 10 per cent of native broadleaves within conifer areas to meet the UK Forestry Standard

Or

- for applications with the aim of converting Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) to an appropriate native woodland

5 POINTS – for applications that meet one of the three-point criteria above and the criteria below:

- for applications that propose work to achieve more resilience and diversity. Your application must clearly demonstrate opportunities have been taken to further diversify species composition on sites where these opportunities exist

Supplementary point – additional benefit

1 POINT – will be awarded, as an additional point, where:

- applications can clearly demonstrate active and adequate protection for vulnerable species from browsing damage

How to claim

Once you have completed your operations, you should submit a Forestry Grant capital claim and a map that shows the species composition of the areas you have planted.

If you claim for planting Improved Vegetative Stock for Sitka Spruce we will verify this against the nursery supplier's document you should supply as support to your claim.

You must also supply a tabular breakdown of the restructuring regeneration component areas to show the results of the completed planting operations.

Woodland Improvement Grant – Restructuring Regeneration component areas table

You cannot make a claim for an area that exceeds that agreed in your contract. You must claim for the areas as detailed in your schedule of works.

We may inspect the areas as approved within the Scottish Rural Development Programme contract and associated felling licence or Forest Plan, to ensure that you have delivered the agreed design and restructured species composition.

Amendments and variations

We understand that from time to time approved plans or licences may require amendments due to unforeseen circumstances such as windblow. It is therefore essential that prior to carrying out any works you ensure that the plan or licence associated with your application is still valid and reflects what has been approved in your contract.

If there have been any amendments to a plan or licence, which may have an impact on your approved Woodland Improvement Grant – Restructuring Regeneration contract, then you must liaise with your local office to agree any variations that may be necessary before you carry out any works.

Technical guidance

- UK Forestry Standard
- Long-term Forest Plan technical guidance
- Management Plan
- General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme
- Marketing and Supplying Forest Reproductive Materials

Previous versions

Previous versions of this page