



Information for Forestry Project Consultees

1. What is scoping?

Scoping is an early consultation process designed to identify any issues that should be considered when preparing the Forest Plan. Individuals and organisations may hold important information about the forest, such as archaeological features, water supplies, protected species or habitats, or potential impacts on neighbours or local communities etc. Scoping is intended to assist the Forest Manager in the preparation of the Forest Plan by identifying these issues early, we can discuss them with the relevant parties and, where possible, agree appropriate mitigation measures. Scoping also helps establish an ongoing line of communication between the Forest Manager and stakeholders with legitimate interests in the forest to ensure that any issues which may arise in the future can be resolved. Scoping may also be referred to as 'Stakeholder Engagement' or 'Consultation Request'.

2. Why have I been asked to comment?

Scoping is a legal requirement for forestry projects where felling is proposed. While it may not be possible to identify every individual or organisation with an interest in the forest, the Forest Manager will seek to be as inclusive as possible. The aim is to involve a wide range of people and organisations who may have an interest in the forest. There is no obligation to respond, however if you do not, we will understand this to mean you have no objections or comments to make. If you do not wish to be included, your details can be removed from the scoping list.

3. How will my comments be treated?

Comments received will be recorded in an Issues Log and summarised in a Scoping Report. A copy of the Scoping Report is made available to anyone who requests it. To comply with GDPR and protect sensitive information, personal details and sensitive locations will be redacted and comments will be attributed only by stakeholder type (e.g. "Neighbour 1"). Confidential information will only be shared with relevant statutory authorities where required.

4. How do I access the scoping information?

Scoping information will either be directly provided to you or made available on the Scottish Woodlands website using the link provided in the scoping letter. The maps and relevant information can be downloaded from the website as a series of PDFs. If you cannot access the information online, a paper copy can be provided on request.



5. What does the scoping information contain?

Scoping information will usually include a summary of the proposed project (Long-Term Forest Plan, Felling Permission, Woodland Creation Application). It will include the duration of the consultation period, and a brief description of the woodland. For a Long-Term Forest Plan, a 'Forest Concept Map' will be provided that outlines initial management proposals and known constraints and opportunities. At this stage, information is high-level. Detailed design work will follow once scoping is complete.

6. How do I comment?

Comments can be submitted in any format, including email or post, using the contact details provided. If there is a particular issue which is better to discuss on site, then the Forest Manager will try to meet you there in person.

7. When do I need to respond by?

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) requires a 30-day consultation period. This period is set to ensure that forestry projects can continue to make progress within a reasonable timescale. Consultation dates are provided in the scoping letter. Some issues may require ongoing investigation and discussion but by raising the issue now, even if you are not able to provide a detailed response within the allotted timescale, then we are at least aware that further consultation will be required. Scoping is intended first and foremost to highlight significant issues not necessarily to fully resolve them.

8. What happens once the scoping period has concluded?

After the scoping period is over, we will review all the comments we have received and consider potential measures to resolve or at least mitigate as far as reasonably possible any problems that have been raised. We cannot promise to fully satisfy all concerns, but we will work with respondents to try and find the most satisfactory and amicable solution for both sides.

9. What about Forest Certification?

If scoping is being completed for a Long-Term Forest Plan, we may also consult for forest certification. We will often prepare our Forest Plans to conform to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) which is the forest certification standard in the UK by which responsible and sustainable forest management is assessed. Once approved, the forest will be assessed for inclusion in the Scottish Woodlands Forest Certification Group Scheme, which is independently audited each year. Membership to the scheme provides assurance that the forest is being managed to meet the highest internationally recognised forestry standards.



10. Why do we need to cut down trees?

The UK is less than 20% self-sufficient in timber and imports around 32 million tonnes of timber and timber products each year. As one of the world's largest timber importers, the UK has a significant international timber footprint. Increasing the supply of domestically grown timber helps reduce reliance on imports, supports national infrastructure needs, and strengthens local timber and construction industries, providing long-term employment.

The trees were planted as a managed timber crop and have now reached maturity. They will be harvested and processed at modern sawmills into a wide range of timber products. Almost all material is used, with smaller timber and sawdust forming products such as MDF and chipboard. These long-life products store the carbon absorbed by the trees, helping to reduce climate impacts.

If left unharvested, the trees are increasingly vulnerable to windblow. Harvesting will therefore be carefully planned and/or phased over a period of at least 20 years to minimise landscape change and local impacts.

11. Will the forest be replanted?

Yes. The Forest Plan, or restocking design, will set out how the forest will be restocked/regenerated, usually with increased species and structural diversity. To ensure successful establishment of the new trees, ground preparation will usually be carried out to ensure that each tree is provided with a suitable planting site that will optimise the growth of the tree, and protect them from browsing animals, weeds and pests. Pesticides are used only where necessary as part of an Integrated Pest Management approach. New trees are typically well established within five years.

12. What about wildlife and important habitats?

Productive forests support a wide range of wildlife, including a variety of bird species suited to mixed conifer and broadleaf habitats, birds of prey, otters, red squirrels, bats, badgers, pine marten, water voles, and wildcats etc. The forestry project proposal will identify important species and habitats and describe how they will be protected and, where possible, enhanced.

Prior to any major operations, wildlife surveys will be carried out. As far as practicable, we will aim to minimise any negative effects but timber harvesting inevitably involves a level of change to the local landscape. Where required, species protection plans and licences will be obtained. You are encouraged to share any relevant wildlife information during the scoping process. Sensitive information will not be made public.