**Woodland Creation Planning Grant: Woodland Creation Design Plan Template**

**How to use this Template**

This Template supports the woodland creation design process associated with the Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG).

The information and supporting documents required at Stage 1 and Stage 2 demonstrate a design process*,*from survey to analysis to synthesis. All elements of your competed Template (including any additional documents funded through a Supplementary Payment) should be clearly referred to in the Template, showing how the survey and analysis were brought together to produce a UKFS-compliant Design Concept plan suited to the proposal site.

The Template is split into two sections:

* **Stage 1: Checklist**

Following a successful application for WCPG, you will be offered a fixed payment of £1,000 to undertake the first part of the design process and complete the Stage 1 part of the Template. When checking sources of data, please always include information that confirms ‘NULL’ results. The information submitted in the Stage 1 Checklist will be used by the Forestry Commission to decide whether to offer funding towards producing a woodland creation design plan – Stage 2 of the Template.

* **Stage 2: The Woodland Creation Design Plan**

The Stage 2 part of the Template takes you through the steps required to create a UKFS compliant woodland creation design plan. The payment for completing this part of the Template will determined by the final eligible area of woodland creation in the design plan and any Supplementary Payments that have been agreed, up to a maximum of £30,000 (including the £1,000 Fixed Payment and any Supplementary Payment). There is a minimum payment of £1,500 per application for Stage 1 and Stage 2.

**Supplementary Payments**

Where Stage 1 has identified a potentially significant issue, applicants may apply for Supplementary Payments to collect further information before a Stage 2 offer is made. With the agreement of the Forestry Commission, Supplementary Payments may be offered as a contribution (at 70% of actual cost) for additional specialist survey work. The Forestry Commission is currently producing a number of survey briefs and you will be asked to use the relevant brief (where available and applicable) to tender for quotes.

**Important notes**

Any work undertaken before an WCPG agreement is offered by the Forestry Commission will not be eligible for funding under that agreement.

There are likely to be some costs involved in collecting the data and undertaking surveys required to produce the woodland creation design plan. It is the responsibility of the agreement holder to pay any costs related to gathering information. A contribution towards any costs incurred has been built into the WCPG offer.

**Timing**

The complete woodland creation planning process, from undertaking the woodland design, to securing any necessary consents, and securing funding to plant, usually takes between six and 18 months but may be longer. The Forestry Commission endeavours to confirm grant funding and regulatory consents as quickly as possible, but the timeframe is dependent on the size, sensitivity and complexity of the proposal site and the timing of any surveys that may need to be seasonal.

Note: The UKFS Glossary is useful at defining many of the technical terms used in the woodland design process.

**Stage 1**

**WCPG reference:**

**Site name:**

**Purpose**

This checklist sets out the information you must collect at Stage 1 of the Woodland Creation Planning Grant. To receive the Stage 1 payment, you must complete this checklist and attach the survey maps / other information required. When completed, this stage will show the issues and constraints that the Stage 2 Woodland Creation Design Plan will need to account for. Please ensure that you provide all the supporting evidence requested.

***Site Context Map***

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|  | **I have attached a Site Context Map.**  This map shows the location of the site on an Ordnance Survey backdrop, scale - 1:15,000 and should show contours, key features and characteristics of the wider landscape context. The map should include text boxes with annotated narrative highlighting landscape and visual sensitivities relevant to woodland creation. | This is required in addition to the maps and evidence requested in the sections below.  The Site Context Map will also form Appendix 1 of your Woodland Creation Design Plan if you proceed to Stage 2.  You can find examples of a Site Context Map on our [Woodland Creation Design Plan example documents page](https://gov.uk/government/publications/woodland-creation-design-plan-example-documents). |

**Biodiversity and important geology**

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| Please include a map and report obtained from [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) or the FC’s [Land Information Search](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-the-land-information-search) or showing the boundary / extent of any designations and priority habitats or priority species. The report should include ‘NULL’ results.  These maps / reports will also form Appendices 5/5a of the Woodland Creation Design Plan at Stage 2.  Please record details of any records that overlap with or are adjacent to the proposal site(s), and any features that are within or might eb affected by the proposal in the summary box below. Your Forestry Commission woodland creation officer can provide advice on adjacency (i.e., how far away to consider looking), where required. | | |
| **Priority Habitats and Species** | | |
| Yes  No | Are any [priority habitats and / or priority species](http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx) known to be present?  Planting on or in close proximity to priority habitats is subject to the principles in [Operations Note 43](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/principles-for-afforestation-on-or-near-priority-habitats-operations-note-43). | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail in the summary below.  Magic layer: Habitats and Species > Various Priority Habitat Inventory layers  The [Local Environmental Records Centre](http://www.alerc.org.uk/lerc-finder.html) should be also be contacted to request information available for the proposed planting area and a surrounding 1km buffer There may be a charge for this information but it could potentially avoid having to undertake a site survey. |
| Yes  No | Is the site within (or above) the Moorland Line?  Being within the Moorland Line may suggest unimproved land or semi-improved pasture. Sites within the Moorland Line may need further checks to ensure the planting will not comprise the important grassland habitat, e.g., through a National Vegetation Classification (NVC) survey. | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail in the summary below.  Magic layer: Designations > Land-Based Designations > Statutory |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site adjacent to Ancient Semi Natural Woodland or Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site? | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail below.  Magic layer: Designations > Land-Based Designations > Statutory |
| **International Designations** | | |
| Yes  No | Are there any international designations overlapping the proposal site or on adjacent land, such as: Special Protection Area (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Ramsar sites? |  |
|  | EUROPEAN SITE - Using the [Forestry Commission Map Browser](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-the-land-information-search) identify the closest SAC, SPA or Ramsar site to the proposal – regardless of distance. | Please attach a map showing the nearest SAC, SPA or Ramsar site. |
| Yes  No | EUROPEAN SITE - Is the proposal site within one kilometre of any SAC, SPA or Ramsar site? |  |
| Yes  No | EUROPEAN SITE - Does the proposal site contain a watercourse, and if so, is the proposal site upstream from an SAC, SPA or Ramsar site? |  |
| Yes  No | Is the site within or adjacent to an [internationally important plant area](https://www.plantlife.org.uk/international/important-plant-areas-international)? | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail below.  Magic layer: Habitats and Species > Species > Plants |
| **National Designations** | | |
| Yes  No | Is there a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) overlapping the proposal site or on adjacent land? | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail below.  Magic layer: Designations > Land-Based Designations > Statutory |
| Yes  No | Is there a National Nature Reserve (NNR) overlapping the proposal site or on adjacent land? | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail below.  Magic layer: Designations > Land-Based Designations > Statutory |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site within an RSPB Important Bird Area? | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail below.  Magic layer: Habitats and Species > Species > Birds |
| Yes  No | Is there an RSPB Reserve overlapping the proposal site or on adjacent land? | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail below.  Magic layer: Designations > Land-Based Designations > Non-Statutory |
| ***Local designations*** | | |
| Yes  No | Does the site include a Local Nature Reserve? | See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide detail in the summary below.  Magic layer: Designations > Land-Based Designations > Statutory (point data only) |
| Yes  No | Is there a Local Wildlife Site overlapping the proposal site or on adjacent land? These may also be referred to as County Wildlife Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC)?  Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) are wildlife-rich (or locally important geological) sites cited for their local nature conservation value. They vary in shape and size and can contain important, distinctive, and threatened habitats and species. In many parts of the UK they are the principal wildlife reserve resource, but their designation is non-statutory, and their only protection comes via the planning system. They are not protected in law like SSSIs or National Nature reserves. SSSIs are a representative sample of biodiverse sites that meet national criteria, while LWSs include all sites that meet local biodiversity selection criteria. Many are owned by private individuals. | Check Local Authority information online or contact the [Local Environment Records Centre](http://www.alerc.org.uk/).  As a landowner you would usually qualify for a free copy of the survey that determined your land as being of county/regional significance for wildlife and/or geology  Provide details in the summary below. |
| Yes  No | Is there a Site of Local Geological Importance or a Regionally important geological and geomorphological sites (RIGS) (also known as regionally important geological sites) overlapping the proposal site or on adjacent land? | Check Local Authority information online or contact the [Local Environment Records Centre](http://www.alerc.org.uk/).  Provide details in the summary below. |
| **Current Land Management** | | |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site subject to any current environmental land management schemes (e.g., Environmental Stewardship or Countryside Stewardship), or in obligation to one? | Provide details of any current scheme below, including expiry date, prescription / objectives. Also provide a copy of the Farm Environment Plan where this is available. |
|  | What impact will tree planting have on any existing grant aid paid (or being paid) (e.g. Environmental Stewardship or Countryside Stewardship) for the land’s current management? | Include map of areas receiving payments, where applicable, and please explain what the intended outcomes of any payments were.  Where the land is subject to Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) payments, please provide evidence of initial discussions with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) about the woodland creation proposals. |
| Now, summarise the biodiversity key issues, and identify what further data gathering or survey work is likely to be required to produce a UKFS-compliant Woodland Creation Design Plan, in relation to the site’s biodiversity sensitivities. Please ensure you include the answers to the questions on European Sites, and that you identify what information needs to be collected in order to fully consider the potential impact of woodland creation on these sites, where applicable. | | |

**Landscape and woodland design**

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| A landscape character appraisal must be included in the woodland design process at Stage 2. The level of analysis required will depend on the scale and complexity of the woodland creation proposals. This should be discussed with the Woodland Creation Officer prior to starting the plan. Landscape Analysis will form Appendix 8 in Stage 2.  In designated landscapes, and on sensitive sites, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) **may** be required. All sites will require a landscape character appraisal. If a woodland creation design plan is funded through WCPG Stage 2, we may support a LVIA using a Supplementary Payment. | | |
| Yes  No | Is the site within a National Park? | Identify the relevant landscape designations and landscape character assessments and landscape guidance (listed below) that will inform and influence the proposed design of the woodland.  Useful guidance on landscape analysis and assessment can be found in the following documents  [UK Forestry Standard Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard) and ‘[Design Techniques for Forest Management Planning](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/design-techniques-for-forest-management-planning-practice-guide)’  See [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) and provide details of the features present in the summary below.  Magic Layers:  Designations > Statutory > National Parks (England)  Designations > Statutory > Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (England)  Designations > Non- Statutory > Land-Based Designations > Heritage Coasts (England) |
| Yes  No | Is the site within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty? |
| Yes  No | Is the site within a Heritage Coast? |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site within an Area of Great Landscape Value or other locally designated landscapes? | Check with the Local Planning Authority.  Please provide details in the summary box below. |
|  | Check the [National Character Area (NCA) Profile](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making) for the site produced by Natural England and identify the key messages around increasing the existing woodland cover. | Please provide details in the summary box below. |
| Now, summarise the key landscape and woodland design issues applying the forest design principles (informed by the site, landscape context, National Charter Area Profile, County and District Landscape Charter Assessment (LCA) and UKFS). This is best illustrated spatially on the Site Context Map (this may require a site visit). Identify what further data gathering or survey work is likely to be required to produce a UKFS-compliant Woodland Creation Design Plan in relation to the site’s landscape and visual sensitivities: | | |

**Water**

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|  | Identify any water bodies that sit within the proposal site or might be affected by the proposed planting scheme. | On a catchment level please include a map of water bodies including identifying watercourses designated as either SPA, SAC and/or RAMSAR and any main rivers.  This evidence, and the evidence requested in the boxes below, will also form Appendices 11 and 12 of your Woodland Creation Design Plan at Stage 2. |
|  | Identify the condition of water bodies within or adjacent to the proposal site, i.e., the qualitative status of the groundwater and / or the downstream water body; are they failing and, if so, why? | Information can be found on the [Environment Agency catchment data explorer](https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/):   * Search by the place name or post code * Select the Water Body (or bodies) from the Water Body Table * Note the Overall classification for 2019, e.g., Moderate. * Under the Classification heading check the Cycle 2 classifications for 2019 to see why the water body is not classified Good   Please describe your findings in the summary box below along with evidence of your search. |
|  | Identify any [*local flood risk*](https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk) information, and the nature of local flood risk within or adjacent to the proposal site.  See here for background: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-management-information-for-flood-risk-management-authorities-asset-owners-and-local-authorities>. | Check here: <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk>  Please describe your findings in the summary box below along with evidence of your search. |
|  | Identify the quantitative status of groundwater or any general water availability issues that might be affected by the scale of planting proposal and the species to be used. | This information can be found on the [Forestry Commission Map Browser and Land Information Search](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-the-land-information-search).  FC Browser layer: Data > Targeting and scoring > W4W Less-than-good Quantitative Status  Please describe your findings in the summary box below along with evidence of your search. |
|  | Identify any public or private water supplies, water abstraction points, or drinking water protection zones that might be affected by the scale of planting proposal and the species proposed. | Check with the Environment Agency, water company and local authority as to the presence of wells, boreholes and abstraction points within and close to the proposed planting scheme.  Please include evidence of your correspondence / internet survey.  You only need to identify any water supplies rather than identify the scale of the issue and potential mitigation. |
|  | Check if the proposal site is within an area of the country where acidification of surface water is an issue.  Where acidification is an issue a Critical Load Assessment maybe required. This assessment confirms the amount of pollutant deposition a part of the environment can tolerate without harm. FC will confirm if this is required. If a Critical Load Assessment is needed it may be eligible for a Supplementary Payment at Stage 2. | This information can be found on the [Forestry Commission Map Browser](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-the-land-information-search) and by running a Land Information Search.  FC Browser layer: Data > Targeting and scoring > CS Water – Water Quality – Acidification  Please include evidence of your correspondence / internet survey. At this stage you only need to identify any issues rather than identify the scale of the issue and potential mitigation. |
|  | Check with Natural England to determine the sensitivity of local water dependent protected sites to the proposed planting scheme. [woodlandcreation@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk) | Please include evidence of your correspondence / internet survey.  You only need to identify any potential issues rather than identify the scale of the issue and potential mitigation. |
| Now, summarise of the key water issues, and identify what further data gathering or survey work is likely to be required to produce a UKFS-compliant Woodland Creation Design Plan in relation to water sensitivities: | | |

**Historic environment**

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|  | Identify all designated heritage assets within or in the vicinity of the proposal site using the boxes below. | If any designated heritage assets are located within your proposal area, or woodland creation might affect the setting of nearby designated heritage assets, you will need to contact [Historic England’s local team](https://historicengland.org.uk/about/contact-us/local-offices/) for their advice. They should be asked for their views on the impact of the proposal on designated heritage assets and their settings. Your Forestry Commission woodland creation officer can provide advice on whether you should contact Historic England if the designated feature is outside the footprint of the proposed woodland.  If your site is within or close to a World Heritage Site you should seek the views of the appropriate partnership board.  Please include a map and report obtained from [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/).  Magic data layers:   * Designations > Land-Based Designations > Historic Statutory > Scheduled Monuments (England) * Designations > Land-Based Designations > Historic Statutory > World Heritage Sites (England) * Designations > Land-Based Designations > Historic Statutory > Listed buildings (England) * Designations > Land-Based Designations > Historic Non-Statutory > Registered Battlefields (England) * Designations > Land-Based Designations > Historic Non-Statutory > Registered Parks and Gardens (England)   Please include a map obtained from the [National Heritage List](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/).  Where relevant please include a map of Conservation Areas obtained from your local planning authority or building conservation department.  Where relevant please include correspondence with Historic England and/or World Heritage Site partnership board.  This information will inform your woodland creation design plan and form Appendix 10. |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site within or adjacent to a World Heritage Sites including their associated buffer zones? |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site within or adjacent to any Scheduled Monuments? |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site within or adjacent to any Listed Buildings? |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site within or adjacent to a Conservation area? |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site within or adjacent to any Registered Parks and Gardens? |
| Yes  No | Is the proposal site within or adjacent to a Registered Battlefield? |
|  | Identify all known non-designated heritage assets recorded within the proposal site, or nearby. | Please include correspondence with the [local authority historic environment/archaeology service](https://ww.algao.org.uk/membership). You should ask them for advice on the proposed woodland planting, a map showing Historic Environment Record (HER) records, a map showing local HLC data, and commentary on any historic features they might be able to identify in lidar data, aerial/satellite images and/or historic maps.  Please include a Historic Environment Record (HER) map. This information will inform your woodland creation design plan and be included Appendix 10. |
|  | Identify how Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) applies to the proposal site. | Please include a local HLC map (if provided by the HER). Selected local HLC reports are available from the [Archaeology Data Service](https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/HLC/).  Please include a national HLC map.  Check National Historic Landscape Characterisation data on [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/).  Magic Layers:   * Landscape > Landscape classifications > National Historic Landscape Characterisation (500m Grid) (England) * Landscape > Landscape classifications > National Historic Landscape Characterisation (250m Grid) (England)   Please describe this in the summary box. This information will inform your woodland creation design plan and should be included as Appendix 9.  below. |
| Now, summarise of the key historic environment issues and identify what further data gathering or survey work is likely to be required to produce a UKFS-compliant Woodland Creation Design Plan in relation to Historic Environment sensitivities: | | |

**Stakeholder interests**

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|  | Please include a map showing any Public Rights of Way on or adjacent to the proposal site. |  |
|  | Identify relevant stakeholders, including residents or communities that may be affected by the proposal.  For suggestions information on relevant stakeholders see Table 1 [Operations Note 53](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stakeholder-engagement-for-woodland-management-plans-operations-note-35). | Please include a list of these in the summary box below. |
| Yes  No | Does the proposal site include any Common Land? | Check on [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/).  Magic layer: Access > Registered Common Land (England)  Where applicable please include a map showing the extent of the common land. |
| Yes  No | Does the proposal site include any land with access rights under Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW)? | Check on [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) or [Natural England’s open access maps](http://www.openaccess.naturalengland.org.uk/wps/portal/oasys/maps/MapSearch/!ut/p/c5/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gfdwMzDyNnA0v_kCBXA08DT38XHy9PQ38DE6B8pFm8AQ7gaEBAdzjIPrN4M3cfC0MnfwNLg0A_CwNPC3MTI0cPbwMDY1OIPB7z_Tzyc1P1C3IjDLJMHBUBQs8ezw!!/dl3/d3/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/).  Magic layer: Access > Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 - Access Layer (England)  Where applicable please include a map showing the extent of ‘access’ land. You will need to include the Local Access Forum in your list of stakeholders if your proposal includes CROW access land. |
| Yes  No | Are there any existing trees on the proposal site that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)? | Provide details below and include a map.  The local authority planning department will have this information. |
| Yes  No | Does the proposal site have access to an agreed timber transport route? | Check with the [Timber Transport Forum](https://timbertransportforum.org.uk/).  Please provide details in the summary below. |
| Now, summarise of the key stakeholder issues and identify what further data gathering is likely to be required to produce a UKFS-compliant Woodland Creation Design Plan in relation to stakeholder sensitivities: | | |

**Silviculture, soil and climate change**

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| When considering your species choice please consider the how future climate may affect your woodland and consider how you can reduce the risk through diversification. You can find advice on our GOV.UK page [Managing England’s woodland in a climate emergency](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-englands-woodlands-in-a-climate-emergency). Or watch this [video](https://vimeo.com/470591325/15362eff78), which provides information on how to select species and provenances to meet management objectives. | | |
|  | Describe the nature of the soils within and adjacent to the proposal site. | A site soil survey is recommended.  A soil map and description of soils can be found on [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx). You will need to draw your site on the map first and zoom out to a very large scale to display the soil map.  Magic layer: Landscape > Geology and Soils > Soilscape  The description on MAGIC should be recorded in the summary box below. |
| Yes  No | Is there any peat present on the proposal site? | Check the [UK Soils Observatory](http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/ukso/home.html).  Click the + button in the layer box, top righthand corner to add a layer.  UKSO Layer: Soil type > Peat coverage |
|  | What is the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) for the proposal site? | This can be found on [MAGIC](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx).  Magic layer: Landscape > Landscape Classifications > Agricultural land classification - provisional (England).  Please record your findings in the summary box below, e.g., what grades of land on the site. |
| Yes  No | Is any of the proposal site uncultivated land?  Cultivation may be by physical means (including ploughing and harrowing) or chemical means (including the application of fertilisers. |  |
|  | Using the [Ecological Site Classification decision support system](https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/ecological-site-classification/) (ESC), provide evidence that at least 85% of the area to be planted (exceptionally this may be reduced where the site dictates) will be planted with tree species classed as ‘suitable’ under the current climate prediction, and ‘suitable’ or ‘marginal’ under future climate predictions (using Baseline, 2050 and 2080 scenarios).  15% of the net planted area may be planted with ‘experimental’ species, i.e., species which are not present in ESC.  If you wish to plant more than 15% of the net area with species that are not present in ESC, you will need to provide evidence with your Stage 1 submission why these species are suitable to the site.  You should also liaise with Natural England and [invasivealienspecies@defra.gov.uk](mailto:invasivealienspecies@defra.gov.uk) and check [Forest Research’s tree species database](https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-species-database/) if you are planning to plant tree species that are not modelled in ESC to consider their potential and environmental impacts. | Please attach the ESC output for baseline, 2050 and 2080 scenarios.  This information will also form Appendix 6 of your woodland creation design plan at Stage 2. |
|  | Is the proposal site within the population range for one of more species of wild deer?  Identify any of the species present, and whether deer population control takes place on the proposal site or adjacent land/wider landscape. | [British Deer Society guidance](https://www.bds.org.uk/index.php/research/deer-distribution-survey) can be used but should be supported with local knowledge.  Your Forestry Commission Woodland Creation Officer can put you in touch with the FC Deer Officer to advise. |
|  | Specify the *Phytophthora ramorum* risk zone that the proposal site falls within. | Check on the [Forestry Commission Map Browser and Land Information Search](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-the-land-information-search)  FC Map Browser layer: Forestry Commission > the *Phytophthora ramorum* risk zones |
| Now, summarise of the key silviculture, soils and climate change issues and identify what further data gathering or survey work is likely to be required to produce a UKFS-compliant Woodland Creation Design Plan in relation to silvicultural sensitivities. The summary should consider how to mitigate the impact of establishment processes and subsequent establishment operations on soil and water. | | |

**Summary of survey requirements**

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| **Information Class** | **Information type required / features present** | **Survey** | **Supplementary Payment applied for** |
| Biodiversity |  |  | Yes  No |
| Landscape and visual |  | Landscape character appraisal and analysis - see Annex 1 | Yes  No |
| Historic Environment |  |  | Yes  No |
| Water |  |  | Yes  No |
| Stakeholder Interest (not covered elsewhere, e.g., access) |  |  | Yes  No |
| Protection required | Presence / level of deer or other browsing mammals |  | Yes  No |
| Silviculture / soil / climate change |  |  | Yes  No |
| Other (e.g., legal) |  |  | Yes  No |

**End of Stage 1 Checklist**

You should now submit this checklist along with supporting documentation and any Supplementary Survey application forms.

Do not begin work on Stage 2 or any survey work for which you are applying for funding (supplementary payment) until you have received a formal offer of funding from the Forestry Commission.

**Stage 2 - Woodland Creation Design Plan Template**

Introduction

Stage 2 of the Template supports the production of a UKFS compliant woodland creation design plan. When using this Template you will need to refer to [the UK Forestry Standard](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard) and Forestry Commission Practice Guide [Design Techniques for Forest Management Planning](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/design-techniques-for-forest-management-planning-practice-guide).

The Template is designed to allow you to demonstrate that you have followed the design process and fully accounted for and integrated the site’s characteristics, constraints and opportunities. Before you begin the design process, please read through the whole Template. Please also familiarise yourself with the list of Appendices at the end of the Template. These identify the supporting documentation that must be submitted with the final draft plan. Do not delete any boxes, and please enter N/A where required.

If you intend to apply for recreational infrastructure funds through the Woodland Carbon Fund (WCF), this should also be detailed within the plan.

Note that, if this plan is subsequently used to support an application for a decision under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) regulations, the decision will be made based on the details of the proposal set out in your Plan. If you deviate from your plan or its prescriptions, then your EIA decision may cease to be valid, and you may need to seek a new EIA decision.

Please note, this written document is part of the integrated woodland creation design plan and must be reviewed alongside the accompanying map-based plans, as follows:

* **Site Appraisal Plan** – a zoned and annotated map showing an evaluation of the survey information, the distinctive features and characteristics present on the proposal site, ideally on an aerial photograph backdrop. Scale – 1:10,000, or smaller scale if required to illustrate detail sufficiently.
* **Design Concept Plan** –Shaped by the Site Appraisal Plan an annotated map showing one or more options for the design of the woodland, as a tool to support stakeholder engagement and consultation. Scale 1:5000 – 1:10,000, or smaller scale if required to illustrate detail sufficiently.
* Final **Woodland Creation Design Plan** (incorporating planting map) – an annotated map showing the final, agreed design of the woodland creation proposal, including species selection, open ground, and access points and routes. Scale – 1:5000 -10,000.

We will soon publish examples of a Site Appraisal Plan and Design Concept Plan, you will be able to use these to help complete your application.

**Version control**

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| **Version number** | **Date** | **Reason for revision** |
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Site Details

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| --- | --- |
| WCPG reference number |  |
| Grid Reference |  |
| Gross Area of Woodland (Ha) |  |
| Owner Name |  |
| Agent Name |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Provide a brief description of the site, its characteristics and current land use:** |

Objectives

Use this section to set out the objectives for the proposal site. Please refer to the FC Practice Guide [Design Techniques for Forest Management Planning](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/design-techniques-for-forest-management-planning-practice-guide) (page 10 and 11) for a completed example of this table.

**Table 1. Objectives**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Resource** | **Objective** |
| Biodiversity |  |
| Landscape and visual impact | (e.g. integration within wider landscape, sensitive integration of distinctive features and characteristics within woodland such as viewpoints) |
| Historic Environment |  |
| Water | (e.g. water quality or flood management) |
| Stakeholder interests |  |
| Timber |  |
| Recreation |  |
| Other (i.e. Carbon sequestration, sporting, access) |  |

Survey

Identifying the survey requirements for the proposal site was completed as a desk-based exercise at Stage 1 of the WCPG process. The information table in Annex 1 of this document identifies the types of information that require consideration when designing new woodland, and where this information can be obtained.

Based on the survey requirements identified in Stage 1, please summarise your survey results in Table 2 using the headings provided. The final survey reports should be included as appendices. If any additional survey requirements become apparent throughout the planning process at Stage 2, they can be added into the summary table in Stage 1 of this Template, including the date they were identified.

**Table 2. Summary of Survey results**

|  |
| --- |
| **Biodiversity** |
| If you have identified any European Sites in Stage 1, please complete Annex 2. |
| **Landscape and Woodland Design** |
| (See Annex 1 for detials of what the survey requires) |
| **Historic** **environment** |
|  |
| **Water** |
|  |
| **Stakeholder interest (not covered elsewhere e.g., access)** |
|  |
| **Silviculture / Soil / climate change** |
|  |
| **Protection** (for example, deer impact and activity surveys, where these have been agreed under a Supplementary Payment) |
|  |
| **Other** |
|  |

Analysis

At this stage, the Site Appraisal Plan should be prepared. This is a zoned plan that graphically evaluates all the survey information from both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the WCPG process.

The Site Appraisal Plan should identify the key factors which have the greatest influence on meeting the proposals objectives and UKFS requirements and how these factors may relate to each other. The Site Appraisal Plan will capture the key landscape and visual characteristics and features of the site and the wider landscape context.

We will soon publish examples of a Site Appraisal Plan and Design Concept Plan, you will be able to use these to help complete your application.

When preparing your Site Appraisal Plan, consideration needs to be given to the design principles set out in [the UK Forestry Standard](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard). These include the Factors that set the Landscape context (Landscape charter, Landscape and visual sensitive and Historic context and Designed landscapes) and Forest design principles: spirit of place (local distinctiveness), unity (landscape fit), shape, landform, pattern of enclosure, scale and diversity. Please refer to [UKFS Landscape Guidelines](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard) and [Design techniques for Forestry Management Planning](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/design-techniques-for-forest-management-planning-practice-guide) practice note for a further description of these principles and how to apply them to your analysis.

Constraints and opportunities

Please attach additional pages to your template if required.

**Table 3. Constraints and opportunities – based on your site appraisal**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Constraint** | **Opportunity** |
| Biodiversity |  |  |
| Landscape, visual and woodland design |  |  |
| Historic environment |  |  |
| Water |  |  |
| Stakeholder interests (not covered elsewhere) |  |  |
| Silviculture, soil, climate change. |  |  |
| Browsing mammals, e.g., deer, rabbit, squirrels |  |  |
| Public access |  |  |
| Other |  |  |

Synthesis – Concept Development

This section sets out how each topic area has been considered, and the information used to influence the design of the UKFS compliant woodland. These sections should consider aspects of design, establishment or management practice that will help to mitigate potential impacts, or realise opportunities for environmental improvement. This will lead to the development of one or more woodland design options that have the potential to meet the objectives for the proposal, all of which will have been informed by the outcome of this analysis.

**Table 4. Synthesis**

|  |
| --- |
| **Biodiversity**  Describe how the impact of the woodland proposal on any designated areas, protected sites, priority habitats or priority species has been considered. Identify mitigation actions that will be adopted to avoid or reduce any adverse ecological impacts. Design principles should follow those contained in the [Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management good practice for Ecological Impact Assessment](https://cieem.net/resource/guidelines-for-ecological-impact-assessment-ecia/) and be proportionate to the scale of the proposals.  Please provide detail of discussions with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) if the land is currently subject to any land management schemes e.g., Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) |
|  |
| **Landscape and woodland design**   1. Describe how the design of the woodland proposal will successfully integrate with the existing landscape and visual character with a focus on the seven design principles. Including consideration of: sprit of place (local distinctiveness), unity(landscape fit), landform, enclosure, semi natural landscapes and features, biodiversity and historic environment, viewpoints/visibility and public access. Explain how the design fits with UKFS forest design principles. The level of landscape analysis required will depend on the scale and complexity of the woodland proposed. 2. Describe how the design has been developed using UKFS Landscape Guidelines and design techniques set out in the [FC Practice Guide Design Techniques for Forest Management Planning](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/design-techniques-for-forest-management-planning-practice-guide), including the use of maps, photos and perspectives. |
|  |
| **Historic** **environment**   1. Describe what mitigation in the woodland design and operational practice will safeguard all known heritage assets likely to be adversely affected by woodland creation. 2. Describe how the design of the woodland accounts for Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC). 3. Please provide evidence that Historic England (where relevant) and / or the local historic environment / archaeology service support, or is content with the draft Woodland Creation Design Plan. |
|  |
| **Water**   1. Describe what consideration has been given for the proposal to make a positive contribution to flood risk reduction, water quality improvement, and / or protection of water resources in areas of low rainfall, or to vulnerability of water bodies to overheating (target areas shown in FC LIS). 2. Where acidification of surface water is an issue (refer to FC LIS), describe how the proposals design addresses the guidelines in the UKFS Practice Guide on [Managing Forests in Acid Sensitive Catchments](https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/publications/managing-forests-in-acid-sensitive-water-catchments/). 3. Describe how any potential detrimental effect the proposal may have on water (flood risk, water quality etc.) will be mitigated and what the residual level of impact is expected to be. Please include how any risk of surface water run-off or drainage (from creating new woodland) will be mitigated in the scheme. |
|  |
| **Silviculture, soil and climate change**  Referring to UKFS [Guidelines](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard) and the Forest Research guide [Managing forest operations to protect the water environment](https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/publications/managing-forest-operations-to-protect-the-water-environment/) and the guidance ‘[Managing England’s woodlands in a climate emergency](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-englands-woodlands-in-a-climate-emergency)’.   1. Describe how the impacts of climate change have been considered in the choice of planting stock (species and provenance/ origin), and how this relates to variation of soil and micro-climate across the site. 2. Please provide justification if you are using up to 15% of the net planted area as a trial for species which ESC either considers to be marginal or does not provide an assessment for. 3. If you more than 15% of the net planted area will be used for species which ESC either considers to be marginal or does not provide an assessment for please explain why you consider these species are suitable for the site both now and in future climate 4. Show that the windiness (Detailed Aspect Method score) for the site has been checked, and that its impact on tree species selection has been considered. 5. Describe, and justify the proposed ground preparation, including drainage, required to establish the proposal. This should be accompanied by a map illustrating where ground perpetration types for the proposal will be used. 6. Describe how the trees will be maintained, including protection and weed control. Include a description of how deer impact, or the presence of other mammals such as grey squirrels, will be managed (where applicable). Also, include a description of any requirement to use, maintain, remove and dispose of plastics including tree shelters 7. Describe how managed open space and woodland rides will be maintained. including detail on cyclical regimes and equipment to be used. 8. With respect to deer control, detail if there is any collaborative landscape scale management in place, or only on a property basis. What other physical protection from deer is proposed, what open space and deer management infrastructure will you include access tracks, shooting mounds/high seats etc? |
|  |
| **Other – for example, detail on recreational opportunities and infrastructure will be required if you plan to apply for funding for infrastructure through the Woodland Carbon Fund.** |
|  |

This information should now inform production of a Design Concept Plan(s). This identifies how the various constraints and opportunities have been considered to produce a Design Concept Plan that delivers a multi-functional, UKFS compliant woodland creation proposal. The Design Concept Plan should include illustrative details, such as design of woodland edge treatments, identification of existing habitats, riparian zones, and mitigation for archaeological features, the location of Public rights of way, and protection of important views and how these are integrated into the design. We will soon publish examples of a Site Appraisal Plan and Design Concept Plan, you will be able to use these to help complete your application.

Stakeholder engagement

The Design Concept Plan should be sent to all stakeholders noted in the Stage 1 checklist as well as all other stakeholders who have input into the survey stage. Please record recipients and their responses in table 5 below. All stakeholder engagement communication from this stage and from the survey stage must be attached to this plan as an appendix (The recommended format is Appendix 4a, 4b, 4c, e.g., where each sub appendix relates to all of the engagement with an individual stakeholder). Holding a stakeholder meeting can be a more effective method than having of one-to-one meetings.

**Table 5. Stakeholder responses**

| **Organisation/ individual** | **Date contacted** | **Response** | **Mitigation agreed / action required** | **Appendix no.** |
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Final Woodland Creation Design Plan

The final stakeholder responses will inform a **Final Woodland Creation Design Plan.** The final Design Plan will show the preferred design option for the woodland proposal, including detail on the species selection, fencing and protection, ground preparation, stocking density, location of open ground and woodland edge transitions, watercourses, notable features, proposed infrastructure (including any recreational facility proposed), and access points.

Describe below how the final plan has been influenced by the final round of stakeholder consultation:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Please complete the planting summary in Table 6 setting out the proposed planting as shown in the final Woodland Creation Design Plan.

**Table 6. Proposed planting**

**Please specify the following:**

**Total plan area =**      hectares

**Net planting area=**       hectares

**Area of open ground=**     hectares

| **Cpt Number** | **Sub-cpts** | **Area (Ha including open ground)** | **Current land use** | **Designation(s)** | **Stocking density (stem per net ha)** | **% open ground** | **Species** | **Species %** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *1* | *a* | *1.2* | *arable* | *none* | *2000* | *10* | *OK/BI* | *60/40* |
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Annex 1: Landscape Character Appraisal

The landscape and visual survey and analysis needs to be expressed in the form of annotated spatial plans and photographs. This will inform the shape of the woodland design by integrating the site, landscape context with the project objectives. The UKFS Factors of Landscape context (Landscape charter, Landscape and visual sensitive and Historic context and Designed landscapes) and Forest design principles (spirit of place (local distinctiveness), unity (landscape fit), shape, landform, pattern of enclosure, scale and diversity) will help inform the appraisal (page 103 of the UKFS). Your Forestry Commission officer can provide examples.

You should undertake a landscape survey and appraisal to include assessment of the following:

* + - Landscape and Visual context including photographs
    - Landscape and other relevant designations
    - Viewpoints and views from within and outside planned woodland
    - Elements of landscape and visual diversity
    - Visual detractors and zones of high landscape and visual sensitivity
    - Identify watercourses, infrastructure supply catchments
    - All characteristics that make the place distinctive and contribute to landscape fit

Annex 2

Where the woodland creation proposal may impact on or affect a European Protected Site please complete the following:

1. Identify site feature

European Site1 (SAC/SPA) or Ramsar site details: To obtain qualifying features for SAC’s and SPA’s go to: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216>.

To obtain qualifying features & species for Ramsar sites go to: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1389>, then open the Site Code (will open as a PDF). Section 12 onwards will contain the site-specific information.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| European site or Ramsar site Name: |  |
| Qualifying Features: |  |
| Conservation objectives (Abridged): |  |

1. Screening

Using the table below identify the potential risks associated with forestry works to the qualifying features?

You must provide sufficient information to enable the Forestry Commission to undertake screening.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Which element of the project \*might impact upon the Qualifying Feature and describe what that impact may be (Note: there may be more than one element, and each element may impact more than one feature)** | **Qualifying Feature Effected**  **(List more than one, where applicable)** | **Risk of significant effect on Qualifying Feature occurring**  **(High, Medium, Low or None)** |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
|  |  | Choose an item. |

\*e.g., ground prep, fencing, infrastructure, access to site, travelling around site, tree planting, weed control, machinery, other (please specify)

Appendices

The below list identifies the information that should be attached to the Woodland Creation Design Plan to support and evidence the information that has been provided.

**Appendix 1** Context Map

**Appendix 2** Site Appraisal Plan - this should be annotated

**Appendix 3** Design Concept Plan – this should be annotated

**Appendix 4** Final Woodland Creation Design Plan

**Appendix 5** Priority Habitat Map and report (magic)\*

**Appendix 5a** Priority Species Map and report (magic)\*

**Appendix 6** ESC reports – baseline, 2050 and 2080

**Appendix 7** Report from Biological Records Centre

**Appendix 8** Landscape Character Analysis (including photographs)

**Appendix 9** Historic Landscape Character

**Appendix 10** Historic Environment

**Appendix 11** LIS maps - water quality and flooding, acidification of surface water, keeping rivers cool \*

**Appendix 12 Other Maps / correspondence related to water sensitivities (as set out in Stage 1)**

**Appendix 13** Survey Documentation, organised individually (Appendix 13a, 13b etc.) for each survey / consultee contacted for information at this stage (Phase 2 habitat survey, species survey, NE, EA, NP, AONB, archaeological survey).

Please add additional appendices here for any survey undertaken not mentioned above, including any paid for with Supplementary Payment.

**Appendix 14** Final consultation / stakeholder engagement notification and responses (e.g. RSPB, CPRE, local historic environment/archaeology service, Historic England, local interest groups, neighbours and those contacted above at survey stage).

***\****Denotes that a map/record of search should be included to identify whether or not a feature or target area is present. The relevant layers need to be visible in the key so that it can be demonstrated that the dataset has been interrogated.