



Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Please complete this form to find out if you need consent from Scottish Forestry, under the **Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017**, to carry out your proposed forestry project. Please refer to Schedule 2 Selection Criteria for Screening Forestry Projects under [Applying for an opinion](#). If you are not sure about what information to include on this form please contact your [local Conservancy office](#).

Proposed Work							
Please put a cross in the box to indicate the type of work you are proposing to carry out. Give the area in hectares and where appropriate the percentage of conifers and broadleaves							
Proposed Work	select	Area in hectares	% Conifer	% Broad-leaves	Proposed work	select	Area in hectares
Afforestation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	43.04ha	81	19	Forest roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Deforestation	<input type="checkbox"/>				Forest quarry	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Location of work		South Dundonald, Cardenden KY5 0AL					

Description of Forestry Project and Location
Provide details of the forestry project (size, design, use of natural resources such as soil, and the cumulative effect if relevant). Please attach map(s) showing the boundary of the proposed work and other known details.
This woodland creation project is located at South Dundonald, KY5 0AL, approximately 1km south of the village of Cardenden in Fife. In total, 43.04ha of mixed new planting (excluding designed open ground) is proposed on circa 52ha of agricultural land, with the remainder constituting minor areas of plantable land being left open for design purposes. This site is classified as F2 for forestry with 'Very good flexibility for growth and management of tree crops' and therefore presents an excellent opportunity for the creation of a diverse and multifunctional productive woodland. The proposed design comprises a mixture of 'diverse' conifer and broadleaved species and has taken into account a range of factors, such as the local landscape, including proximity to residential properties, existing infrastructure, and biodiversity networks. The proposed species include Norway spruce and Douglas fir as productive conifers, together in some areas with a birch nurse; native woody shrubs such as hawthorn, and other native trees including oak and cherry. The above percentages of conifer and broadleaf assume all areas where birch is included as a nurse species as being 100% conifer. No other schemes are believed to have been approved in this area within the previous 5 years.

Provide details on the existing land use and the environmental sensitivity of the area that is likely to be affected by the forestry project.
The site is currently leased to an agricultural tenant and used for mixed agriculture. The main enterprise is currently sheep grazing, although some areas are also used for cropping. The site is currently identified as a 'preferred' area for woodland expansion as identified in the Fife Forestry and Woodland Strategy 2013-18 (currently under review), which considered a range of sensitivities – including agricultural capability and landscape

values. Specific environmental sensitivities as described in Scottish Forestry's Environmental Impact Assessment for forestry projects application guidance.

i. Soil capability and deep peat soils

The site consists of a mixture of natural and reformed/remediated agricultural soils, reflecting the local history of mining within this area. Soil types (based on an up-to-date 1:10k soil survey) are an intergrade between brown surface water gleys and gleyed (but otherwise typical) brown earths, both of which are cultivated. Around 21.5ha are considered natural with the remainder being naturalised reformed/remediated soils based on local site knowledge. All soils are relatively dry, likely to be affected by agricultural field drains, and relatively compacted with sub-surface indurations expected in the remediated areas. Land capability for agriculture is 3.2 and there is no deep peat present.

ii. Location of surface and ground water and public/private water supplies.

There are no water supplies or surface watercourses present within the application area. Agricultural field drains are expected to be present throughout and a deep ditch runs along the eastern edge of the easternmost field. The closest natural watercourse is the Gelly Burn, approximately 40m south of the application boundary at its closest point.

iii. Presence of historic environment sites

There are no significant or protected historical remains known to be present within or in close proximity to the application boundary, as determined by desk study (PastMap and National Library of Scotland records) and on-site assessment. Significant undiscovered remains are considered unlikely given the available records and extensive history of intensive management, including mining and land remediation.

iv. Landscape context and designations, including wild land areas

The site is not considered to be especially sensitive from a landscape perspective and there are no landscape designations or wild land areas present within or adjacent to the project boundary (FLS Local and National Datasets; Scottish Forestry Land Information Search). The landform is predominantly flat or gently sloping and visibility limited to the immediate vicinity, with a generally small-medium scale landscape. The topography contributes to foreshortening and as such small areas of existing woodland appear more extensive than in reality; therefore there is relatively good capacity for this landscape to absorb additional woodland creation without any major changes to the local landscape character (on-site assessment and FLS Landscape Architect advice).

v. Existing land use and agricultural context

Land capability for agriculture (LCA) across the site is 3.2 which indicates suitability for a 'moderate range of crops with trend towards grass in rotation' (JHI land capability for agriculture 50k). This is reflected in the current use of the site for mixed agricultural production which focusses primarily on sheep grazing with some arable cropping.

There is a high availability of this type of land within Fife and the local area within 5km of South Dundonald, with this site comprising just 1.5% of LCA 3.2 within a 5km radius.

vi. Habitat types, priority habitats and Schedule 4 plants

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Habitats within the proposed woodland creation boundary consist of species poor improved grassland and arable fields (FLS Environment staff following Phase 1 habitat survey methodology). Surrounding the woodland creation site are areas of young and mature broadleaved woodland, including some native and long-established plantation origin (LEPO) woodland. No standing water is present.

vii. Protected species and designated sites

Following desk assessment and walkover surveys by FLS Environment staff the only species of note are badgers and raptor species, both of which appear to be using the site only for foraging activities, with no setts roosts or other breeding sites recorded. There are no records of ground nesting birds on-site and the habitat is considered unsuitable for ground nesting birds such as lapwing and skylark which have been recorded locally.

viii. Access and use of the site by people.

A single right of way runs adjacent to the application area and is within FLS ownership while numerous core paths follow the surrounding public road network. The site is currently accessible under SOAC and this is likely to improve as a result of woodland creation, as indicated by representatives of the Cardenden Community Council and Local Access Forum.

Description of Likely Significant Effects

Provide details on any likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment (resulting from the project itself or the use of natural resources) and the extent of the information available to assist you with this assessment.

Population and human health

No LSE - the project will not affect any potentially vulnerable assets such as private water supplies, nor result in significant increases in noise, dust, or other pollution. There is currently little use of the site by people and the proposals have taken into account future access to the site under SOAC, including suitable crossing points where fencing is installed. The local Community Council and Access Forum have expressed overall support for the proposals.

Biodiversity

No LSE - there are no priority habitats or species present which would be negatively affected by the proposed woodland creation which is considered to present an overall enhancement to the site's biodiversity value, with negligible effects on the few species currently using the site.

Land (e.g. land take)

No LSE - the proposed woodland creation at South Dundonald will have limited impact on the availability of agricultural land within the local area. No woodland creation is proposed on prime agricultural land (defined as LCA codes 1, 2 and 3.1) with the site being classified as 3.2, which is the most commonly occurring LCA types within the local area; and overall the proposed scheme will affect only 1% of the area for combined LCA codes 1-4.

Soil (e.g. organic matter, erosion, compaction)

No LSE - the proposals will have a net benefit on soil quality by reducing the intensity of management, including ground disturbance and the application of fertiliser/pesticides for agricultural purposes. Ground preparation prior to tree establishment is likely to involve sub-surface soil ripping to relieve compaction with no or minimal surface cultivation (e.g. flat planting or mounding).

Water (e.g. hydromorphological changes, quantity and quality)

No LSE - the proposals will not result in any significant hydromorphological changes or changes to water quality or quantity at a catchment level. At a local level there may be minor improvements in water quality and a reduction in surface and sub-surface (field drain) runoff from the site. It is likely that any sub-surface drainage which is present will be functionally destroyed by deep cultivation (soil ripping), subsequently resulting in more natural hydrological processes within the soil profile.

Air

No LSE - the proposals will not result in the release of any pollutants or dust into the atmosphere beyond what is to be expected from normal land-based activities (e.g. emissions from machinery operation).

Climate

No LSE - the proposals will have a positive effect on the climate. Carbon sequestration will be achieved through new woodland creation and carbon loss during establishment will be minimal with the use of low-impact cultivation techniques on predominantly mineral soils.

Material assets

No LSE - all known transport routes, infrastructure, utility lines and private residences have been taken into consideration as part of the design and measures taken to minimise any future risk to these assets (e.g. through windblow or management operations) - namely by applying generous buffers between these assets and productive woodland areas. FLS are aware that Scottish Power Energy Networks may route a new high-voltage underground line through parts of the site and in this instance the planting proposals will be updated accordingly. Any changes required as such will be discussed with Scottish Forestry and a new or updated Screening Opinion Request submitted as and if required.

Cultural heritage

No LSE - there are no significant cultural heritage remains on the site and it is not considered likely that any undiscovered remains will be present.

Landscape

No LSE - the site is not highly visible, and there is good capacity for additional woodland within the local landscape. Furthermore, the design has considered landscaping at a local level, including in close proximity to local access routes and residential areas.

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Include details of any consultees or stakeholders that you have contacted in order to make this assessment. Please include any relevant correspondence you have received from them.

FLS internal consultees:

- Local Landscape Architect
- Regional Environment Team
- Regional Delivery Teams (including Woodland Creation and Stewardship functions)
- Regional Visitor Services Team
- Regional Area Land Agents and National Agricultural Advisor

External consultees were contacted as part of the wider South East Fife Woods Land Management Plan consultation, of which this application forms a part. An extensive list of statutory and non-statutory stakeholders were contacted, including but not limited to, Fife Council, Local Concillors, the Local Community Council and Access Forum and individual members of the local community including all direct neighbours and the current tenant. The full list of consultees and responses received is recorded in appendix ... of the associated Land Management Plan.

Mitigation of Likely Significant Effects

If you believe there are likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment, provide information on the opportunities you have taken to mitigate these effects.

We do not believe these proposals will have any likely significant effect on the environment and therefore no additional mitigation measures are required.

Sensitive Areas

Please indicate if any of the proposed forestry project is within a sensitive area. Choose the sensitive area from the drop down below and give the area of the proposal within it.

Sensitive Area	Area
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Property Details			
Property Name:	Cardenden (South Dundonald Farm)		
Business Reference Number:		Main Location Code:	
Grid Reference: (e.g. NH 234 567)	NT 2189 9327	Nearest town or locality:	
Local Authority:	Fife Council		

Owner's Details			
Title:		Forename:	
Surname:			
Organisation:	Forestry and Land Scotland	Position:	Central Region
Primary Contact Number:		Alternative Contact Number:	
Email:	enquiries.central@forestryandland.gov.scot		
Address:	Five Sisters House, Five Sisters Business Park, West Calder		
Postcode:	EH55 8PN	Country:	
Is this the correspondence address?	N/A		

Agent's Details			
Title:		Forename:	
Surname:			
Organisation:		Position:	
Primary Contact Number:		Alternative Contact Number:	
Email:			
Address:			
Postcode:		Country:	
Is this the correspondence address?	Select...		

Office Use Only	
GLS Ref number:	