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To whom it may concern

### **Your input to a woodland creation proposal**

We, the Forestry Commission, are asking those involved in the design of new woodland creation proposals to share this letter with stakeholders to request information, advice, or feedback on their proposal. This letter explains what information you should provide to help inform the development of the woodland proposal and how this information will be used by us.

The proposer is asking you to provide information, advice or feedback as part of work to prepare a woodland design plan for a potential new woodland. This is in line with our guidance on Woodland Creation Design Plans which directs proposers on how to meet the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard<sup>1</sup> (UKFS). The UKFS sets out requirements and guidelines for sustainable forest management in the UK, ensuring woodland management and creation proposals consider how social, economic, and environmental objectives are balanced. This balance will vary depending on the proposed new woodland's situation and its management objectives.

Any input you provide to inform the design of the proposed new woodland will be shared with us to help us assess the proposal for its compliance with the UKFS. Your feedback will be most helpful and effective if it considers how specific UKFS requirements and guidelines might affect or be affected by the creation of the proposed woodland, or its design.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard>

The Government has announced an overarching aim to significantly expand tree and woodland cover across the UK in response to both the climate and biodiversity emergencies. The current commitment is to increase tree planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025 in line with the recommendation the Committee on Climate Change in 2019 and this will help us meet net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

To achieve this will require planting the right tree in the right place. To ensure that your feedback supports this overarching aim, please make your comments factual and as constructive as possible; clearly set out your support for the proposals and the benefits they bring and/or, if you believe there are negative impacts, explain what these issues are and how these could be avoided or mitigated through the woodland's design.

Most woodland creation proposals in England are regulated by us, under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) England and Wales Regulations 1999<sup>2</sup>.

If the final design for this proposal is subsequently put forward for assessment under these regulations, your input will be used by us to inform our Opinion as to whether it is likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

Note: The process of reaching our Opinion under the 1999 Regulations may involve us seeking further information from stakeholders in relation to environmental features. Where relevant information has already been gathered to help develop a design plan for the new woodland, we would not expect to contact you again (unless required by statute or similar duty). You should therefore use this opportunity to provide a comprehensive and complete response to the proposal.

Where there has been a material change to the proposal, we contact you again. For example, if the proposal's footprint has changed, or new information has come to light that indicates the woodland may have an environmental impact not accounted for in the woodland's design.

Yours sincerely,

Forestry Commission

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessments-for-woodland-overview>