

General Environmental Management Plan (GEMP) - Forestry



TG-NET-ENV-519	General Environment Management Plan (GEMP) - Forestry		Applies to
			Transmission ✓
Revision: 2.00	Classification: Internal	Issue Date: May 2024	Review Date: May 2027

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Forestry and woodland is an important resource in Scotland. It can contribute biodiversity, climate resilience, flood regulation as well as be an important product for materials. Overall there is a large societal importance on healthy, sustainable forestry management and works to tree's needs to be carefully considered so impact is minimised and the appropriate management regime is put in place. This GEMP is to be followed by anyone working undertaking forestry works, other tree felling or arboricultural works on behalf of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN).

2 Legislation

- 2.1 All felling works must be authorised under an appropriate Planning Permission, Section 37 consent, Felling Licence, or permitted under The Forestry (Exemptions) (Scotland) Regulations 2019. The requirements of any consent must be adhered to at all times.
- 2.2 Landowner agreement must be in place prior to felling or other tree works taking place.

3 General Compliance Requirements

3.1 Felling/Tree Removal

- 3.1.1 No tree felling/vegetation removal should take place during the bird breeding season unless pre-felling surveys have been undertaken.
- 3.1.2 Mulching should only be used where there is a need to clear the site of tree residue or where trees or areas are too small to fell commercially (typically, a minimum top diameter of 7 cm will be commercially recovered). The resultant mulch is to be partially incorporated with the vegetation layer, or separated and made available for alternative reuse, preferably within the project.

3.2 Other Tree Works

- 3.2.1 Avoid all recognised injurious practices such as:
- Topping or lopping to an arbitrary height or branch length;
 - Pruning flush cuts;
 - Unbalancing a tree crown by excessive one-sided pruning;
 - Inappropriate use of flailing; and
 - Climbing damage – Care shall be taken to avoid injuring thin and weak barked species by inappropriate use of rope access techniques on trees (such as use of climbing irons) on trees to be retained.

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- 3.2.2 Vegetation should be left well balanced with natural crown shapes.
- 3.2.3 If the only pruning option is to severely reduce or unbalance a tree, then coppicing, or felling and replacement planting are often better options and shall be agreed with the landowner.
- 3.2.4 Pruning must also take into account the vegetation re-growth expected in the interval between cuts. This will vary widely between plant species and sites.

3.3 Protection of Retained Trees

- 3.3.1 Avoid damaging those standing trees which are to be retained.
- 3.3.2 A root protection zone should be identified and enforced around all trees to remain on site that are within close proximity to the works area to ensure that no accidental damage is caused to the tree roots. Root protection zones should be defined in line with the British Standard 5837.
- 3.3.3 No material arising from site works are to be stored within the root protection zone or stacked against trees.

3.4 Access

- 3.4.1 Utilise brash to assist with the access requirements for felling and construction machinery and give consideration to rights-of-way by transient wildlife. In agreement with environmental specialists and landowners, small piles of brash and timber may be left on site at specific, identified locations in the interest of habitat creation and increasing biodiversity.
- 3.4.2 Access damage – Vehicle access and treatment of arisings shall avoid injury to low branches, stems, root buttresses and feeder roots. Branches should be removed by saw prior to access being taken. Breaking of limbs is not acceptable during access.

3.5 Storage of Marketable Timber

- 3.5.1 Forest roadside timber stacks should be built in a safe and stable condition and generally of a height that does not exceed product length. All timber stacking should be undertaken and managed in-line with 'FISA Safety Guide 503' and other industry best practice including 'Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) Guidance on the safe management of timber stacks'.
- 3.5.2 Forest felling sites shall be left tidy, with all marketable timber extracted to forest roadside, brash and stumps left in a condition that meets industry best practice and stumps cut low and neatly, with any torn hinges or jagged spikes removed, to prevent them becoming a danger to site visitors as a trip hazard or an obstacle to vehicles. Remove all litter from site.

3.6 Forestry Waste

- 3.6.1 Note that forest wastes are controlled under SEPA Waste Regulations which must be adhered to.

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3.7 General Forestry Practice

3.7.1 Forestry best practice as specified by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Scottish Forestry, Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA) and other Government and Non-Government Organisations should be implemented at all times. The following is provided as a guide (but not a definitive list) to the standards that should be followed during forestry works:

- The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS)
- BS3998 (2010) Recommendations for Tree Work
- BS5837 (2012) Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction
- FISA Safety Guides
- HSE Guidance and Regulations
- SEPA Guidance and Regulations
- Scottish Water Guidance

3.7.2 Spreading Disease - Appropriate regard shall be given to avoiding spreading fungal diseases. Forest Research biosecurity guidance should be followed. Consideration should be given to landowners' requirements for treating stumps.

3.7.3 Leave watercourses, culverts and ditches undamaged and clear of arisings. No felling into watercourses is allowed.

3.7.4 Local drainage systems to be maintained and not damaged or interrupted by the felling works.

3.7.5 No fires should be lit on site. Fire risk in and near wooded areas should be considered and risk assessed with additional mitigations imposed during prolonged dry periods (e.g. implementation of wider non-smoking zones).

3.7.6 No dogs permitted on active worksites.

4 Revision History

No	Overview of Amendments	Previous Document	Revision	Authorisation
01	New document created	N/A	1.00	Richard Baldwin
02	New branded template Expansion of 3.5.1 & 3.5.2, expansion of 3.7.1, addition of 3.7.6	TG-NET-ENV-519 Rev 1.00	2.00	Richard Baldwin
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