

Circular No. 1 of 2012

25 January 2012

To all Registered Foresters

## **Forest Roads (Grant) Scheme**

### **Woodland Improvement (Tending and Thinning of Broadleaves) Scheme**

1. Circular 20 of 2011, dated 16 December 2011, announced the closure of the Forest Roads Grant Scheme to new applicants and the intention to consult with industry stakeholders on a proposed replacement Scheme. It also announced the suspension of the Woodland Improvement (Tending and Thinning of Broadleaves) Scheme, pending a review of liabilities and available funding.
2. The review of the Woodland Improvement (Tending and Thinning of Broadleaves) Scheme has now been completed and the Scheme is re-opening immediately to new applicants with processing of existing applications for approval re-commencing. There are no changes to the Scheme conditions or rates of payment.
3. Following completion of the consultative process with stakeholders it has been decided to also re-open the Forest Roads Scheme with the following changes:
  - a) Maximum rate per linear metre to reduce from €45 to €35.
  - b) Payments will be made net of VAT, regardless of applicants VAT status.
  - c) Road density to be reduced from 25 linear metres per hectare to 20 linear metres per hectare.
  - d) The construction of a "Standard back in type loading bay" or a "Standard loading bay with internal turning area" may be grant aided where the area allows. Pull-in lay byes (longitudinal loading bays) along public roads may be considered on a case by case basis at an equivalent roading of 60m where the area allows. Apart from a loading bay, only the minimum amount of roadway required will be grant aided to ensure forwarding distances do not exceed a maximum of 500 metres.
  - e) The forest road grant scheme is limited to farmers and private forest owners and companies. Public authorities and state owned companies are not eligible for grant aid for forest road development.

These changes apply to applications under the old Scheme that had yet to be approved by the time the Scheme was closed on 16 December 2011 and to all new applicants under the new Scheme. The revised Scheme document will be placed on the Departments website as soon as possible.

4. Those applicants under the old Scheme whose applications were awaiting approval at the time of its closure may move to the new Scheme, subject to their written acceptance of the

new provisions and to certification by their registered forester as to the requirement for planning permission for any road access. These applicants are currently being written to and a copy of the certificate to be completed by the applicant and registered forester is attached with this Circular for information.

5. You will already be aware that, on 21 September 2011, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government introduced Regulations bringing into effect from that date certain provisions of the Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2011. Section 17 of that Act, while it continues to exempt forest roads from the planning process, requires that the creation of an access from that road to a public road must be approved by the relevant Planning Authority. A development to provide such access to a public road that had commenced before 21 September 2011, and will be completed not later than 12 months after such commencement, does not require approval by the Planning Authority.
6. As a consequence all new applications under the Forest Roads (Grant) Scheme must be accompanied by:
  - a) certification by the registered forester that the access was in existence on 21 September 2011; or
  - b) certification by the registered forester that work to commence it had started by 21 September 2011 and will be completed within 12 months of such commencement; or
  - c) written confirmation from the local authority certifying that the development does not require planning permission; or
  - d) confirmation that planning permission has been obtained, a copy of which must be submitted with the application; or
  - e) evidence of application for planning permission e.g. planning application number or other confirmation from the local authority that an application has been submitted.

Application under the Forest Roads Grant Scheme will not be accepted unless one of the above is presented to the Department.

**Gerry Cassidy**

**Assistant Principal**

**Forestry Division**

**FOREST ROADS (GRANT) SCHEME**

**JANUARY 2012**

**DECLARATION BY APPLICANT**

Contract Number: CN.....

I ..... of ....., hereby accept the revised terms of the Forest Roads (Grant) Scheme 2012, and request that my application under the former Scheme be processed under the terms and condition of the 2012 Scheme.

Applicants Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name in Block Capitals .....

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**Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions), Act 2011**

*Section 17 of the above Act requires that the creation of an access from a forest to a public road have planning permission, except where the opening of access was commenced before 21 September 2011 and will be completed within 12 months of commencement.*

**DECLARATION BY REGISTERED FORESTER**

I ....., hereby declare that from my examination of the Forest Roads (Grant) Scheme application submitted by ..... and referenced CN ..... that access onto a public road existed for this forest road before 21 September 2011 or had commenced before that date and will be completed within 12 months of the commencement date.

Signature (and company stamp) of Registered Forester: ..... Date: .....

Name in Block Capitals .....

Or

I ....., hereby declare that from my examination of the Forest Roads (Grant) Scheme application submitted by ..... and referenced CN ..... that access onto a public road did not exist, or had not commenced, for this forest road prior to 21 September 2011.

Signature (and company stamp) of Registered Forester: ..... Date: .....

Name in Block Capitals .....