5-Year Bracken Management Plan

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| **Name of the Land Holding** |  |

****Summary****

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| --- | --- |
| **Location (grid ref of centre of site)** |  |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Start/End Years** |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date plan completed** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date(s) of site survey(s)** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Plan completed by (name & role]** |  |

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| **If the land contains a designated site (SSSI (or ASSI), SAC, SPA or Ramsar site) provide the site name:** |  |

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| **If the site contains a scheduled monument or historic site provide details:** |  |

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| **If the land is adjacent to (within 200m of treatment area), or requires passage through a designated site or Scheduled Monument/ historic site to access treatment area provide details** |  |

Introduction

* Successful bracken treatment requires a long-term approach. It will not be achieved by a single operation.
* This template is designed to allow you to record information to assist with the planning and delivery of a 5-year bracken treatment plan; It is for your own purposes and should be seen as a working document.
* Every area of land is different, and it is not possible to predict how bracken will respond to a treatment. It is important to review progress each year and adapt the plan when necessary.
* The template provides information that will be required to develop a treatment plan and a format for recording information.
* Not all the information will be relevant to each site, and you may wish to adapt the template accordingly.

Information Required

It is recommended that the following maps are prepared, and photographic evidence taken. This information will form a starting point for records of treatments and allow you to monitor the condition of the bracken over time.

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| 1 | Map or maps showing the current extent of bracken coverage at an appropriate scale. Include information on age of bracken if available. |
| 2 | Map or maps showing where the proposed bracken treatment will take place at an appropriate scale. Include:   * Areas that will not be treated – Please state your reasons why. This may include risks to sites of archaeological or ecological importance, risks of soil erosion or impacts on the landscape (short and long term). * Boundaries of protected sites (SSSIs/ ASSIs, SPAs, SACs, Ramsar sites) * Location of scheduled monuments or historic sites * Areas where access with vehicles is possible – mark any isolated dangers and proposed routes to avoid such areas * Fencelines, overhead cables and underground pipelines / cables that might be affected by the planned treatment * Significant features for livestock management, e.g. gathering routes, water supplies |
| 3 | Map or maps showing areas of bracken treated over the last 10 years (and georeferenced photos where available). |
| 4 | Photographs showing current bracken coverage, labelled with locational information. |

Section 1 - Site details & treatment history

1.1 - Reasons for bracken treatment

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| What are the objectives of bracken treatment e.g. restore pasture, increase biodiversity, improve the condition of a historic feature?  Consider how bracken is affecting the habitat/species or other feature(s) of interest, and what the ultimate goal is. |  |

1.2 - Ancient Monuments / Historic sites (within treatment area)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Map ****and/or Field code**** | ****Site Reference Number**** | ****Name**** | ****Description**** | ****Could the bracken treatment cause damage?**** | ****If yes, what mitigation is planned or how will the area be protected?**** |
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1.3 - Record of Past Bracken Management - include details on work undertaken independently or funded through a designated site Management Agreement or Agri-environment scheme

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Map and/or Field Code | Area treated (ha) | Method(s) | Effectiveness of treatment | Primary or follow up treatment |
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Section 2 – Proposed Bracken Treatment

2.1 - Primary treatment proposed in Year One

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| Map and/or Field code | Current Density (%) and Extent (ha) of bracken? | What is the vegetation under the bracken? | What habitat is likely to replace bracken? | Area of bracken proposed for treatment (ha) - write “no treatment” if no action is proposed | Type of treatment method (or reason for no treatment) and justification for choice | Number of treatment repeats | Month(s) treatment will take place |
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| Total (ha) area of bracken proposed for treatment in 2.1 |  |

2.2 - Monitoring of Primary Treatment

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Map and/or Field code | Date | Density (%) and Extent (ha) of bracken | Date | Density (%) and Extent (ha) of bracken | What is the vegetation under the bracken? |
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2.3 - Follow-up treatment proposed in years 2 - 5

For the treatment to be effective, follow-up treatments will be required. It is likely that the amount of bracken regenerating after primary treatment will justify action by year 2, but this will need to be confirmed by survey following primary treatment.

Initially, this table should be completed as part of the development of the management plan, but it should be updated each year so that it records the follow-up treatments carried out.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Map and/or Field code | Density (%) and Extent (ha) of bracken | Effectiveness of primary treatment | Area of bracken proposed for follow-up treatment (ha) - write “no treatment” if no action is proposed | Type of treatment method (or reason for no treatment) and justification for choice | Number of treatment repeats | Month(s) treatment will take place |
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Section 3 - Other Considerations

There is information about the different treatment methods in the bracken guidance issued by the UK Nature Conservation Bodies. (link to guidance). This also includes case study summaries to provide additional detail from practitioners.

A survey of the site should be carried out as part of the preparation of the Bracken Treatment Plan to identify any risks of unintended harm or damage to **habitats/species** of interest and/or **archaeological features/historic** sites. In particular, **breeding birds** and **mammals** and impacts on **reptiles**, such as adder, should be avoided. The bird breeding season is between March and August – any treatment in this time must be preceded by a bird survey and treatment postponed if birds may be harmed or Schedule 1 birds disturbed.

Any work proposed within, or with potential to affect, a SAC, SPA or Ramsar site needs to be assessed under the Habitats Regulations. Your Nature Conservation body can be contacted for advice.

Where a Scheduled Monument is present, advice should be sought from the relevant heritage body to establish the preferred treatment choice and to determine whether Scheduled Monument Consent is needed.

There may be areas where it is not possible or safe to carry out treatment of bracken. Areas to be treated should be walked **before the bracken grows** to identify hazards for vehicles, and operators on foot, which may be obscured by the time that the treatment takes place. Areas where treatment is not feasible should be marked on the mapping.

Areas that are particularly susceptible to poaching, soil erosion or compaction should also be identified as this will determine the suitability of treatment methods; it may not be appropriate to treat all areas. You will also need to consider e.g. wet areas vulnerable to vehicle tracking on the approach to a site. Mitigation for this could include selecting vehicle routes that avoid these areas to avoid damage and minimise the number of passes (show proposed routes on maps in Section 5).

**Any use of herbicide must comply with conditions attached to the herbicide label, and good practice must be followed.**

A written health and safety risk assessment must be undertaken before any treatment commences.