# Public Body and SSSI owner Geological Sample Collecting Application Form: for permission to collect Geological samples from Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

## About this form

This form is only for use by **public bodies** (including **government-funded bodies** and **educational institutions**), and by **SSSI owners, occupiers and managers** (either on their own behalf or on behalf of a third party). This is because these are the only people to whom NatureScot can grant consent to undertake an activity on an SSSI. If you are not the SSSI owner, occupier or manager and you do not represent an organisation that may be considered a public body, you will need to ask the SSSI owner, occupier or manager to submit this form on your behalf. This form is also intended primarily for use by those wishing to collect geological samples for **research** purposes.

Further guidance notes on completing this form are available on our NatureScot webpage **‘**[**Guidance on collecting geological samples from Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Scotland’**](https://www.nature.scot/doc/guidance-collecting-geological-samples-sites-special-scientific-interest-scotland).

## How to submit your application

Please complete this form and submit your application through [**InformedDECISION™**](https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/our-planning-role-and-consulting-us/naturescots-informeddecisiontm), uploading the form when given the option to upload documents. If you feel that duplicate information is being requested, you may either provide the information in duplicate or cross-reference between the form and InformedDECISION.

## How we assess your application

The scientific value of a geological SSSI is the sum of the existing scientific data from the site, and the potential scientific information remaining within the site. Removing geological samples decreases the store of information remaining, and would usually be considered irreversible damage to the SSSI feature. However, in some circumstances the loss of resource may be off-set by the scientific information gained from the samples taken, allowing an overall assessment of no loss of scientific value for the SSSI. To assess an application to collect geological samples for research, therefore, we require information on the samples being collected (where, when, how and how much is being taken) to assess loss of material from the SSSI, and also the proposed use of the material (outputs, future accessibility of material) to assess gain in scientific information.

**PUBLIC BODY AND SSSI OWNER GEOLOGICAL SAMPLE COLLECTING APPLICATION FORM**

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| Application reference no. | To be completed by NatureScot |

**1. Applicant details**

This should be the details of the person completing this form, who is agreeing to be responsible for the actions of all members of the field party

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| **Name of applicant** |  |
| **Institute or affiliation** |  |
| **E-mail address** |  |
| **Contact telephone no.** |  |

**2. Field party details**

Please give total number of participants in field party, and list a designated member or members of the field party who will be on-site when sampling is carried out and will be responsible for ensuring that any terms of consent from NatureScot are adhered to (include the Applicant if relevant).

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| **Number of participants in field party** |  |
| **On-site member(s) of field party responsible for ensuring terms of consent are met:** |
| **Name** | **Institute or affiliation** | **Contact during fieldwork****(E-mail or tel. no.)** |
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I have permission from the above-named individuals to provide their institute/affiliation and contact information to NatureScot on their behalf.

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| Y/N |

**3. Visit dates**

The dates you wish permission to collect samples on (you may give a range of dates if exact dates unknown).

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| From: | To: |

**4. Project description**

Please include details about the project, explaining its aims, objectives and value/benefits. To allow its impact on geoheritage to be assessed, please also specify, for the entire duration of the project, the total proposed number of field visits to this/these SSSI, and the total proposed amount of sample collecting (include any sampling already undertaken, or anticipated in future field seasons). If sampling may need to be repeated (e.g. initial samples turn out to be unsuitable for analysis) please also include this in the project description. If your project involves sample collecting from any other SSSI in Scotland, please include this information as well, to allow assessment of overall impact on Scotland’s geoheritage.

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| **Project description** |
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| Total number of field visits to this/these SSSI, involving sample collecting, anticipated for this project (a range may be given if exact number uncertain): |

**5. Sampling methods**

Are there samples in an existing collection that could be used for this project? Y/N

Could existing samples be used instead of taking new samples? Y/N

Required samples will be taken using the following method(s). Please tick all that apply.

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| Loose rock material  | Spade/ trowel | Soft sediment/ soil core | Geological hammer | Geological hammer and chisel | Rock drill (coring) | Rock saw | Other |
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| If ‘other’ please specify: |

Please confirm that samples will be taken from locations that are as discreet and as least visually intrusive as possible.

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| Y/N |

**6. Sample location details**

Please complete one sample location details box for each proposed sample location (copy and paste to add more sample location details boxes as necessary), and include as much detail as possible. Grid references may be given as 3 or 4 grid points defining an area, if exact point not known, however, please keep such areas as small as possible. Please also attach a map with sample locations clearly marked. Please include an estimate of the maximum volume of sample material you will remove from each sample location.

**Note** that you will likely be required to record images of all rock or sediment exposure sampled both in close-up and in wider context, with ‘before’ and ‘after’ images of the sample site, to aid location in the future for condition monitoring purposes.

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| **1** | **Sample location reference no./name:** |  |
| **Name of SSSI:** |  |
| Grid reference (8 or 10 figure): |  |
| Description of location/directions to location: |
| Is this a location described in any geological guide book?  Y/N | If ‘yes’ please give guide book & location number. |
| Means of access (e.g. on foot, by vehicle) and access route: |
| Sampling method(s) to be used (if all those ticked in section 5 above write ‘as above’):  |
| Rock/sediment type(s), geological unit name, & maximum number and size (in cm3) of samples to be taken: |
| Maximum volume of samples to be taken from this location (cm3): |

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| **2** | **Sample location reference no./name:** |  |
| **Name of SSSI:** |  |
| Grid reference (8 or 10 figure): |  |
| Description of location/directions to location: |
| Is this a location described in any geological (excursion) guide book?  Y/N | If ‘yes’ please give guide book & location number. |
| Means of access (e.g. on foot, by vehicle) and access route: |
| Sampling method(s) to be used (if all those ticked in section 5 above write ‘as above’):  |
| Rock/sediment type(s), geological unit name, & maximum number and size (in cm3) of samples to be taken: |
| Maximum volume of samples to be taken from this location (cm3): |

**7. Sample curation**

Please include details of how any sample material remaining after analysis will be archived or disposed of. Will it be available for other researchers to study? How long will material be retained?

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| **Sample curation** |
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**8. Scientific and educational outputs**

Please indicate what publications, or other outputs, are expected from this work.

**Note** that you will be asked to provide copies of publications to NatureScot.

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| **Scientific and educational outputs** |
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**9. Likely conditions of consent**

I understand it is likely that conditions of consent will include:

1. All members of the field party will at all times follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, the Scottish Geology Trust’s guidance on Ethical Rock Collection and the Geologists’ Association’s Code of Fieldwork. They will also follow the Scottish Fossil Code at fossil sites, the Scottish Core Code if undertaking coring, and NatureScot guidance on sampling for cosmogenic dating if undertaking this activity.
2. All members of the field party will follow all conditions of any consent issued by Scottish Natural Heritage (operating as NatureScot) relating to this application.
3. Rock other than the sample volumes specified and consented to, will not be moved or removed.
4. The field party will photo-record all sampling, including taking ‘before’ and ‘after’ photos, and photos enabling sample locations to be re-visited and identified clearly.
5. A field report (including sampling log with photo-record of exposures sampled) will be provided to NatureScot. Unless otherwise agreed, this report will be provided within 6 months of the last sampling date consented to in relation to this application.
6. Any publications resulting from the work consented here will acknowledge that data was obtained from SSSIs, and detail which SSSIs, in order to document the research knowledge gained from the SSSIs.
7. Copies of any publications resulting from the work consented here will be provided to NatureScot.

I understand that the issue of any consent by Scottish Natural Heritage (operating as NatureScot) relating to this application does not absolve me from any contractual or legislative responsibility I may have to inform or obtain the permission of any other party, including the relevant land owner or manager, prior to carrying out the proposed operation.

I understand that if consent conditions are not fulfilled, consent is withdrawn, consent is likely to be withheld on future occasions, and members of the field party may be in breach of wildlife crime laws.

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| **Signed:** | **Date:** |