Annex F – FBIS-C Tier 1 Tranche 1 Fencing Specification and installation guidelines

Minimum expenditure on all fencing types in FBIS - C

The minimum expenditure on each eligible fencing item is £2500, within the minimum eligible project cost of £5000.

Cross Compliance Considerations for fencing

Before erecting any fencing under the FBIS - C, you should ensure that you do not breach cross compliance requirements and/or any existing environmental legislation in doing so. For example:

- You must comply with all the requirements as defined under the Northern Ireland Cross Compliance Standards.
- You must have consent from Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) before erecting a fence on environmentally designated areas.
- You must have consent from Historic Monuments Division before erecting fencing on or within the designated zone of a scheduled monument.
- You must comply with the Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.
- You must not remove any existing field boundary landscape features without prior permission from DAERA.
- You are advised to check with DAERA before erecting fencing on areas of moorland or other semi-natural vegetation.

Further information and contact details are available on the DAERA website.

Failure to observe cross compliance or other existing legislative measures may result in penalties being applied to your area-based payments.

Ineligible fencing

Certain items/areas are not eligible for funding under the EU-approved RDP, including statutory requirements, like-for-like replacement and maintenance. Therefore basic stockproof boundary fencing and replacement of existing internal fences is excluded.

The fencing of 'commons' is also not eligible.

Eligible Fencing

The following 3 types of fencing are eligible**:**

Fencing to improve Animal Health and Biosecurity

This fencing type is for livestock farmers only, to provide a gap of not less than 2 metres at the farm boundary between neighbouring herds/flocks.

1. **On the EU database this is Item code B60 -** New double boundary fence – 2 permanent stockproof fences with a gap of not less than 2m between them to improve bio-security. Posts must be at least 6ft and must have a minimum 15

year life, guaranteed by the manufacturer. (Grant support per metre)

Grant available is £4.80/metre at a £12/metre reference price

Neighbouring farms

In practice, this might mean neighbouring farmers coming to an agreement between themselves on the exact location of the double fence on the holding boundary and on any sharing of the cost (net of grant). These would be a private matter for the neighbouring farmers to resolve. One of the neighbouring farmers would apply for the support, claim for the support and would be liable for the whole investment.

LPIS considerations

Boundaries between neighbouring farms will already be in place and these will not need to be notified to LPIS unless a new fence is installed at more than 2 metres from the centre of the existing hedge / ditch. Where this distance exceeds 2 metres, a new LPIS boundary will be created on the new fence line and the area fenced off will be deemed ineligible for area based schemes payment.

When existing field parcels are sub-divided as a result of FBIS activity, the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) claimant should notify DAERA LPIS as soon as possible to ensure the accuracy of the LPIS is maintained.

<u>Fencing to improve Production and Resource Efficiency – For more effective grazing management</u>

2. **On the EU database this is Item code D 30** - **New permanent electrified fencing** (the minimum standard is four strands of 12 gauge, 2.5mm high tensile wire) to improve grassland management. Posts must be at least 6ft and must have a minimum 15 year life, guaranteed by the manufacturer (grant support per metre)

Grant available is £2.00/metre at a £5/metre reference price including energisers.

This is envisaged as new permanent perimeter fencing with electric strands, to allow for the temporary sub-division of an existing grazing management unit for rotational grazing or strip grazing. The minimum standard is four strands of 12 gauge, 2.5mm high tensile wire to improve grassland management.

3. **On the EU database this is Item code D 31- New permanent stock proof fencing** to improve grassland management by sub-dividing an existing grazing management unit (where it is not a replacement fence). Posts must be at least 6ft and must have a minimum 15 year life, guaranteed by the manufacturer (grant support per metre).

Grant available is £2.40/metre at a £6/metre reference price.

This is envisaged as new permanent fencing sub-dividing an existing grazing area to allow more effective stocking densities. These new permanent fences in a new location will require notification to update your LPIS map.

Existing grazing management unit:

This is defined as a block of land used for grazing livestock that has no existing internal fences at present. This block of land could be a single field or land parcel or a number of adjoining fields or land parcels where non-fenced landscape features define internal boundaries. Erection of internal fences will improve grazing management and productivity within the unit.

Fencing Specification – FBIS – C

All the fencing options above need to be erected to the following standards:

Fencing – British Standard

Must be erected to a minimum of BS 1722-2:2006 and to the specification detailed below;

Posts

Posts must be at least 6ft and have a minimum 15 year life, guaranteed by the Manufacturer.

Where wooden posts have been treated with a preservative, this must have been applied by the manufacturer.

Stock proof fencing

New materials must be used for ‘Stock-proof fencing’.

The minimum standard for ‘Stock-proof fencing’ is galvanised woven wire and three strands line wire **or** five strands line wire.

The overall height of the fence must be at least 1.05 m from the ground to the top wire.

Straining posts must be equivalent in strength and durability to 125 mm top diameter round timber or 125 mm x 125 mm sawn timbers.

Straining posts must be set at centres not exceeding 100 m or at each change in direction or gradient.

Struts must be equivalent in strength and durability to 73 mm top diameter round timber or 75 mm x 75 mm sawn timber.

Struts must be mortised into the straining post.

Intermediate posts must be equivalent in strength and durability to 73 mm top diameter round timber or 75 mm x 75 mm sawn timber and set at centres not exceeding 3.00 m.

All posts must be free of bark.

Must use strands of galvanised 4 mm mild plain steel wire or 2.5 mm barbed wire.
The ‘Stock-proof fencing’ must be properly strained and secured to posts with galvanised staples.

Permanent Electric Fence

New materials must be used for ‘Permanent electric fencing’

The electric fence energiser(s) must have a minimum output of 2 joules and comply with the appropriate British Standards.

The minimum standard is four strands of 12 gauge, 2.5mm high tensile wire.

The overall height of the fence must be at least 1.05 m from the ground to the top wire.

Straining posts must be equivalent in strength and durability to a minimum 125 mm top diameter round timber.

Straining posts must be set at centres not exceeding 100 m or at each change in direction or gradient.

Struts must be equivalent in strength and durability to a minimum 73 mm top diameter round timber.

Struts must be mortised into the straining post.

Intermediate posts must be equivalent in strength and durability to a minimum 73 mm top diameter round timber at centres not exceeding 5m.

All posts must be free of bark.

Terminal insulators must be heavy duty.

‘Permanent electric fencing’ equipment must be installed as detailed in the manufacturer’s instructions and associated standards.

FBIS Fencing Definitions

Existing Grazing Management Unit

This is defined as a block of land used for grazing livestock that has no existing internal fences at present. This block of land could be a single field or land parcel or a number of adjoining fields or land parcels where non-fenced landscape features define internal boundaries. Erection of internal fences will improve grazing management and productivity within the unit.

What is DAERA’s definition of a boundary?

DAERA field boundaries are mapped to the following types of physical features:

• Permanent fence (including post and wire fence)

• Wall

• Hedge

• Bank

• Metalled road (tarmac, concreted or compacted)

• Edge of a body of fresh water e.g. a lake

• Edge of a river or stream where the body of water is greater than 2 metres wide

• Edge of trees in arable land

• Sheughs

• High Water Mark Mean Tide

• International boundary as shown on Land and Property Services (LPS) (formerly Ordnance Survey NI) map

• Top of cliff or rock face

The eligibility of field boundaries should always be considered in conjunction with the guidance on ineligible features present along a field boundary.

Landscape Features

Landscape features in the context of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) comprise of dry stone walls, ditches or sheughs, hedgerows, including trees in hedgerows, earthbanks and archaeological sites.

Hedges, earthbanks, fenced off hedges, and stone walls are eligible provided their width does not exceed two metres from the centre (measured at the base) and where there are no ineligible features present in or adjacent to the boundary. Where the whole width of these boundaries exceeds two metres from the centre, the entire area becomes ineligible. Only features meeting the GAEC definition of a landscape feature as set out below and located in, or forming the boundary of an agricultural field parcel can be considered eligible for BPS and other schemes.

Landscape features are protected under GAEC and must not be removed except by prior written permission from DAERA This includes infilling or laying drainage pipes in open ditches or sheughs.

Hedges,

Hedges, earthbanks, stone walls, archaeological sites (historic monuments)

The Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) definition of a hedge or hedgerow is as follows:

A hedgerow is an in-field or boundary linear feature with hedge-like shape and characteristics. A hedgerow is composed predominantly of woody species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, whins and trees but may also include briars and bramble. Scrub encroachment and weeds such as nettles and thistles do not constitute a

hedgerow. A hedgerow does not have to be stockproof and gaps of no more than 5m at canopy level are considered to be part of the hedgerow. To be a hedgerow the feature must be at least 5m long with bushes (excluding trees crowns) which at the top of the canopy are touching or almost touching or, in the case of newly planted hedges, will reach this standard when fully grown.

The Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) definition of an earthbank is as follows:

An earthbank is a man-made linear feature of limited occurrence, usually made up of a core of stones covered with sods. River banks, earth silo banks or mounds of earth resulting from excavation are not classified as earthbanks.

Health and safety and Environmental considerations if using creosote treated posts

Health and Safety

Due to the carcinogenic properties of creosote, it is only authorised for industrial and professional use where adequate risk mitigation measures can be taken. It was withdrawn from public use in 2003.

If using creosote treated posts request and read the product data sheet from the supplier and comply fully with any health and safety precautions listed. DAERA recommends at a minimum that the following precautions should be taken:

- Avoid direct contact with skin.
- Handle with impervious gloves.
- Wear a dust mask and eye protection when sawing or machining.
- Dispose of off-cuts, sawdust etc safely.
- Waste wood may be disposed of by burning subject to any local rules on burning in the open or via your local waste disposal facility.
- Creosoted timber should not be used where there is risk of frequent (i.e. often-occurring, habitual or constant) skin contact nor where it may come into contact with or contaminate animal or human foodstuff.

Environmental

There are also significant environmental risks when wood treated with creosote comes into contact with soil or water. Therefore, creosote should be applied to posts by the manufacturer and fully dried / cured before use, to minimise the risk of soil and water contamination.

In addition, posts treated with creosote can be unsuitable in some circumstances. This is because creosote is a biocide which could have an adverse environmental impact on certain sites. For example, creosote treated posts erected along a river bank close to pearl mussel beds could impact negatively on a protected species. NIEA, in certain sensitive environmentally designated sites, have specified the use of untreated posts.

In such cases, DAERA may specify the use of an alternative post.