

Application for an afforestation Project EIA Opinion in England

The Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations (England and Wales) 1999 (as amended) regulate afforestation, amongst other forestry activity. Anyone planning to undertake an afforestation project in England may apply to the Forestry Commission (FC) for an EIA Assessment or Opinion on whether their project is a relevant project, and therefore likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Relevant projects under the regulations must have the Forestry Commission's Consent before they can be carried out.

Definition:

- By afforestation, we mean conversion of a non-woodland land use, for example agriculture, into woodland or forest by means of planting or regenerating trees to form woodland habitat. This can include projects for short rotation coppice (SRC) and other forms of energy crop and/or single stem forestry and Christmas trees.

The enquiry application form, along with a project map, is used to gather key information about an afforestation project and the project proposer and/or their agent, to enable the FC to give an informed EIA Assessment or Opinion under these Regulations. **Please consider** each section of the form carefully when completing it, and provide relevant evidence to support your application.

The 2017 transposition of the EIA (Forestry) Directive (2014/52/EU) into UK law introduces Schedule 2A to the 1999 Regulations. This requires the applicant to obtain relevant environmental information and to use this information to inform the design and implementation aspects of an afforestation project, and where possible, to minimise any significant environmental effect.

Schedule 2A requires all relevant information and evidence gathered e.g. from field surveys, environmental records searches and engagement with stakeholders, and the design methodology supporting an afforestation project to be submitted when applying for an EIA Assessment or Opinion.

Supplementary guidance for afforestation has been provided to help you source available environmental information and to complete this form.

Please note: A request for EIA Assessment or Opinion may not be accepted if this information is not provided or is not complete.

Project maps

Project map(s) will show the boundary of the forestry project and identify details of the operations you intend to undertake. Additional maps should be used as required to show further information about the site, its constraints and surrounding influences.

Applicants can get free copies of an Ordnance Survey MasterMap® (OSMM) map by completing the [Map Request Form available from our website](#). You should allow two weeks for the delivery of the OSMM maps requested.

If you do not use OSMM, you must provide us with an original map or a good quality photocopy. **Please note:** We will return applications that include maps that are not presented to an acceptable standard, without registering the project.

If you would like to submit an application using digital mapping data, rather than OSMM, you should contact the local FC office to ensure the data to be submitted will be in an acceptable format and standard.

Before you mark the map, check that:

- The map is up-to-date, and of Ordnance Survey origin;
- It is presented at a suitable scale of either 1:10,000, 1:5,000 or 1:2,500;
- The map scale is shown, and relevant detail is not hidden by folds, marks or labels;
- At least two horizontal and two vertical Ordnance Survey grid lines are shown.

Marking the map

- Clearly show the location of the EIA project route and boundary;
- Mark the grid reference of the centre of the project;
- If the point of access to the area is not obvious, mark this on the map also;
- NB: Do not use a map used for a previous application.

Complete this Enquiry application form for an Assessment or Opinion on whether the afforestation project is a relevant project under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations (England and Wales) 1999.

Part 1 – Applicant details

Title:		First name:		Surname:	
Organisation:				Position:	
Address:					
Postcode:					
Main contact number:			Secondary contact number:		
E-mail:					
Is this the address for correspondence about this application?				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If No please provide the correspondence address:					

Part 2 – Applicant category

Please give details of the applicant status? Put a cross in one box only:	
<input type="checkbox"/> PE - Personal occupier	You or your family own the property, or hold it as a family trust, partnership or family farm.
<input type="checkbox"/> VO - Voluntary organisation	An organisation funded by public subscription or a charitable trust or community organisation e.g. Woodland Trust, National Trust, Wildlife Trusts, or Groundwork.
<input type="checkbox"/> PU - Public ownership	Government departments and their agencies e.g. Natural England, Defence Estates, Prison Service, Crown Estates (not including land personally owned by members of the Royal Family) and The National Forest. Local and Unitary authorities, National Parks, local education and schools authorities.
<input type="checkbox"/> BU - Business occupier	A company, forestry investor, business partnership, syndicate or pension fund.
<input type="checkbox"/> OT - Other: (provide details)	

Part 3 – Applicant type

Please give details of the Applicant Type? Put a cross in one box only:			
<input type="checkbox"/> LS – Leaseholder	<input type="checkbox"/> OW – Owner		
<input type="checkbox"/> TE – Tenant	<input type="checkbox"/> TR – Trust		

Part 4 – Property details

Please give details of the location of the work or project?	
Name of Property:	
Ordnance Survey 6 fig Grid Ref for the project: (e.g. XX123456)	
Nearest town:	
Local Authority District or County	

Part 5 – Agent or woodland manager’s details

Title:		First name:		Surname:	
Organisation:				Position:	
Address:					
Postcode:					
Main contact number:			Secondary contact number:		
E-mail:					
Is this the address for correspondence about this application?				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If No please provide the correspondence address:					

Part 6 – Projects on sensitive sites or areas

<p>The Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry)(England and Wales) Regulations 1999 – Schedule 2: Any part of an afforestation project within a designated site or area, as identified as Sensitive in the Regulations, is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Check the project area against these designations using Land Information Search and/or https://magic.defra.gov.uk/, and record the results below.</p>	<p>Insert Y or N</p>
a) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Proposed SSSI (PSSSI)	
b) SSSIs with a Nature Conservation Order ¹	
c) National Park	
d) The Broads	
e) World Heritage Site, including their designated buffer zone	
f) Scheduled Monument	
g) Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	
h) A 'European site', designated under the Habitats and Species Regs (Special areas of conservation / Special protection areas, under the Wild Birds Directive)	
i) Ramsar sites	
j) National Nature Reserve	
k) Nature Reserves, including Local Wildlife Site (including Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs) and County Wildlife Sites).	
l) Sites of local Geological importance	
Forestry projects within Sensitive sites will require engagement with and potentially Consent from the Authorities responsible for the site designation. Land owners are legally obliged to take account of these designations.	<p>(tick✓)</p>
I declare that I, the land owner / applicant [delete as appropriate] am aware of my legal responsibilities in connection with this forestry project	

¹ Section 29 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 7 – EIA thresholds: Projects on non-sensitive and Low Risk sites

Refer to Supplementary Guidance for afforestation projects Annex 1 for more information on EIA afforestation threshold options. Which project are you seeking an EIA Assessment or Opinion on?		Insert Y / N
Part, or all of the Project is in a Sensitive Area (see Part 6 of this form) Project of any size	EIA – Application for Opinion	
No part of the Project is in a Sensitive Area (see Part 6 of this form), but part of it can be in a Low Risk area. Project less than 2ha	No EIA Opinion required	
No part of the Project is in a Sensitive Area (see Part 6 of this form), but part of it can be in a Low Risk area. Project between 2ha – 4.99ha	EIA - Basic Notification (Assessment)	
The whole project is entirely within a Low Risk area? Check using the Land Information Search Project between 5ha – 50ha <i>(The Low Risk data is pre-screened for major environmental and land use concerns. Confirming this layer is in place helps the FC reach its decision)</i>	EIA - Full Notification (Assessment)	
No part of the Project is in a Sensitive Area (see Part 6 of this form), but part, or all of it can be in a Low Risk area. Project 5ha or larger	EIA – Application for Opinion	

Part 8 - Consideration of Protected Species

Land owners are legally obliged to take account of protected species	Insert Y / N
I have considered the effect this project will have on wild birds and the area and diversity of habitat(s) for wild birds.	
I am aware of the Good Practice guidance to safeguard European Protected Species when undertaking forestry operations and the need to obtain a licence if I cannot comply with the Good Practice.	
I am aware of the Good Practice guidance to safeguard badgers when undertaking forestry operations and the need to obtain a licence if I cannot comply with the Good Practice.	

Part 9 – Overview of Projects

Tick box if this application is accompanied by a Forestry Commission approved Stage 2 Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG) plan:

Provide an overview of the afforestation project.

Explain the project’s objectives, the design methodology to avoid, mitigate or compensate for any significant environmental effect, and how the work proposed will be delivered.

Proposed work	Area in hectares	% conifer	% broadleaf
Afforestation			
<p>Project Overview:</p> <p><i>[If this application is accompanied by an approved Stage 2 WCPG plan then you do not need to complete the rest of this Part (but you must complete the area and % split fields above.)</i></p>			

Part 10 – Environmental checks

Tick box if this application is accompanied by a Forestry Commission approved Stage 2 Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG) plan:

If this application is accompanied by an approved Stage 2 WCPG plan then you do not need to complete the rest of this Part.

Use this checklist to provide brief details about the land within or affected by the project. Where environmental impacts are identified, provide further evidence and/or design statements showing how the project will avoid, mitigate or compensate any impact.

Use the [Supplementary Guidance for afforestation projects](#) to locate relevant environmental information, data and expertise from appropriate sources.

A.	Land use					(tick✓)
	What is the current use of the land? <i>(tick all that apply)</i>					
	Scrub	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arable	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cropped land	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Improved Grassland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Semi Improved Grassland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unimproved land	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Show land use types on the project plan/map(s)</i>					
B.	Biodiversity					Insert Y / N
	Have any semi natural habitats, habitat features or priority species been identified within or which may be affected by the project area? For example: a pond, veteran tree, ancient hedgerow, species rich pasture, blanket bog etc.					
	<i>Show any records of areas of semi natural habitats and/or habitat features and/or priority species on the project plan/map(s)</i> <i>Evidence engagement with local environment records centre (LERCs)</i> <i>Demonstrate how the project will avoid, mitigate or compensate</i>					
C.	Water (and soils)					Insert Y / N
	C.i. Have any public or private drinking water supplies been identified within or which may be affected by the project?					
	C.ii. Is the project in an area identified by the Environment Agency where groundwaters are at poor quantitative status?					
	C.iii. Is the project in an area identified by the Environment Agency where acidification of surface water is an issue?					
	C.iv. Is the project adjacent to a main river and/or does it affect flood defence structures or facilities?					

<p><i>Show water related features on the project plan/map(s)</i> <i>Evidence consultation with Environment Agency, local authorities, other water bodies and owners / users of private water supplies</i> <i>Demonstrate appropriate project design, including how the project will avoid or mitigate impacts on sources of surface and groundwater</i></p>

D.	Landscape character	
	D.i/. What is the national landscape character area?	
	What is the local landscape character type?	
		Insert Y / N
	D.ii/. Does your woodland creation project meet the requirements of the local landscape character assessment guidelines for trees and woodland?	
<i>For projects greater than 10ha, evidence engagement with local authorities</i> <i>Demonstrate appropriate spatial design and species choice for the project</i>		
E.	Historic and cultural environment	
	From your records checks, have any local historic environment records identified features within or which may be affected by the project?	
	<i>Evidence engagement with local historic environment records (HER) centre</i> <i>Show known historic environment features on the project plan/map(s)</i> <i>Demonstrate how the project will avoid, mitigate or compensate</i>	
F.	Open Access land	
	F.i/. Is the project in an area of Open Access land, as defined by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW)?	
	F.ii/. What area (ha) of the project is on open Access land?	hectares
	<i>Show extent of Open Access area(s) on the project plan/map(s)</i> <i>Evidence of engagement with local access forum</i> <i>Demonstrate how the project will sustain open access</i>	

Part 11 - Stakeholders

Record the individuals and organisations who have been contacted regarding the project; record date contacted, date of response and brief description of views presented. The afforestation project application should demonstrate how views and perceived negative effects have been addressed and/or how the project has been adapted to capture opportunities to improve it.

Individual or Organisation	Date contacted	Date feedback received	Outline of response

Part 12 – Declarations

I apply to the Forestry Commission for its Assessment or Opinion, under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations (England and Wales) 1999, as to whether the afforestation project described in this application is a relevant project, and, I certify that:

	Applicant Please tick
I have enclosed a plan/map of the afforestation project and environmental information that supports the project to which this application refers (this may be a Forestry Commission approved Stage 2 Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG) plan).	<input type="checkbox"/>
To the best of my knowledge and belief the information given in this application is accurate and complete.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Applicant: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Part 13 – Applying for EIA Consent

IMPORTANT: ONLY COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF YOU REQUIRE EIA CONSENT

If you expect your project to have a significant effect on the environment, because of its location within a Designated site or area, or its scale, or for some other factor, you can ask for our Consent under the Regulations, rather than wait for an Assessment or Opinion on whether the project is a relevant project.

However, we strongly recommend that you apply for our Opinion or Assessment of your project first, and allow us to evaluate if EIA Consent would be required.

I apply to the Forestry Commission for its Consent under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations (England and Wales) 1999, as I believe the afforestation project described in this application is a relevant project, and, I certify that:	Insert Y / N
The afforestation project is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, and I am applying for EIA Consent.	
I have completed a draft Environmental Statement for my project, ready to support my application for Consent.	
I have enclosed a plan/map of the afforestation project and environmental information that supports the project to which this application refers.	
To the best of my knowledge and belief the information given in this application is accurate and complete.	

Name of Applicant: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____