

CHECKLIST OF CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Instructions for Screening

This checklist is designed to help users decide whether EIA is required based on the characteristics of the likely impacts of the project. It is to be used in case-by-case screening in conjunction with the **Screening Checklist**.

The **Screening Checklist** provides a list of questions to help identify where there is the potential for interactions between a project and its environment. This checklist is designed to help decide whether those interactions - effects - are likely to be significant.

Those responsible for making screening decisions often find difficulties in defining what is "significant". A useful simple check is to ask whether the effect is one that ought to be considered and to have an influence on the development consent decision. At the early stage of Screening there is likely to be little information on which to base this decision but the following list of questions may be helpful.

These questions can be asked for each "Yes" answer in the **Screening Checklist** and the conclusion and the reasons for it noted in the checklist. The questions are designed so that a "Yes" answer will generally point towards the need for EIA and a "No" answer to EIA not being required.

Questions to be considered.

1. Will there be a large change in environmental conditions?

No – The woodland project will not be a continuous woodland, and intensive arable land use will still occur in neighbouring fields, so in the context of the LDU the area of the land use change is not significant

2. Will new features be out-of-scale with the existing environment?

No – The LDU is extensive and this project will only impact on a small geographic area.

3. Will the effect be unusual in the area or particularly complex?

No – The effect is designed to mimic existing semi natural woodlands within the area and to provide a mosaic of woodland, open land and farm land.

4. Will the effect extend over a large area?

No - The LDU is extensive and this project will only impact on a small geographic area.

5. Will there be any potential for transfrontier impact?

N/A

6. Will many people be affected?

No – This is a very rural part of the county with small farm villages of 10's of people, and individual households and farmsteads.

7. Will many receptors of other types (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected?

No – Planting of the woodland is proposed primarily on intensive arable land

8. Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected?

No – Where nationally and locally important resources are recorded, the design of the woodland proposal will ensure that these features are given sufficient safeguard from the woodland creation through consultation with the appropriate authority.

9. Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?

No

10. Is there a risk that protected sites, areas, features will be affected?

No – Where nationally and locally important resources are recorded, the design of the woodland proposal will ensure that these features are given sufficient safeguard from the woodland creation through consultation with the appropriate authority.

11. Is there a high probability of the effect occurring?

Yes – The project will take place, and so there is a high probability of a Landscape impact, but limited and not significant within the context of a larger LDU

12. Will the effect continue for a long time?

Yes – The project will gradually manifest itself on the landscape, and (under current policy) remain in place.

13. Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary?

Permanent under current policies, but not significant within the context of the LDU

14. Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent?

Continuous but not significant within the context of the LDU

15. If it is intermittent will it be frequent rather than rare?

N/A

16. Will the impact be irreversible?

No – It will be possible to remove the woodland at any stage and return the land to arable production, subject to the appropriate policies and legislation being in place.

17. Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect?

No – Good design of the project, and flexibility in how its is placed within the landscape to accommodate existing features of importance will ensure that there is no need for avoidance, or reduction or repair or compensation.