

EIA SCREENING OPINION

Application Reference Number	15NP0050
Description / Site Address	Notification for prior notification of forestry development: Construction of 600 metre extraction road at Nanny's Hills, Wark, Hexham, Northumberland

SCREENING OPINION – Planning Authority Summary

Following consideration of the proposed development in terms of the formal EIA Screening process, the LPA has assessed the significance of the potential environmental impacts of the development, and has concluded that, based on the information provided, the proposal would not be EIA development. A statement of reasons follows.

EIA Screening Checklist

(Stage 1) – Is the proposal indicated by the broad descriptions given in Schedule 2 Column 1 of the Regulations?

Yes – 10. Infrastructure projects; (f) Construction of roads

(Stage 2) – Does the proposal exceed the threshold criteria as set out in Schedule 2 Column 2 of the Regulations?

No – The proposed development does not exceed one hectare in area

(Stage 3) – Does the proposal exceed any of the more lenient criteria in Annex A of Circular 02/99?

No – Paragraph A22 of this Circular states that EIA is more likely to be required for linear transport schemes over 2km.

Stage 4) – Assessment of Sensitivity. All constraints & designations affecting or affected by the proposal, both on the site itself and its surrounding area, should be considered. EIA Regulation 2(1) defines sensitivity. The thresholds in Schedule 2 Column 2 and criteria in Circular 02/99 do not apply in sensitive areas.

Yes – The development is within a sensitive area as defined by EIA Regulation 2(1).

EU/National Site Designations

Northumberland National Park – Designation of area including and surrounding development site. Potentially sensitive in terms of biodiversity, landscape, tranquillity and archaeological considerations

The Kielder Mires Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - Nationally designated site, protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Stage 5) – Taking into account the selection criteria of Regulation 3 (characteristics and location of development; characteristics of potential impact), is the proposal likely to have significant effects on the environment?

Statement of Reasons:

In considering the nature and location and the development proposal, the development may have the potential to have significant impacts in terms of the following:-

- Landscape Impacts
- Ecological Impacts

Landscape Impacts

From a landscape perspective, the proposed road is not considered to impact detrimentally upon the landscape character of views of this part of the National Park. It is recognised that the site lies within the setting of a commercial forest, and thus would be well screened and in keeping with the overall appearance of its surroundings, which include such infrastructure necessary for the purposes of forestry and extraction. On balance, it is not considered that there would be any significant environment impacts arising from the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed road, based on the information provided.

Ecological Impacts

The proposed development would be of a sufficient distance away from the nearby Kielder Mires Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and as a result, it is considered unlikely that there would be any adverse impacts upon the ecology of the site.

Conclusion

The Local Planning Authority has considered the details of the proposed development in terms of the formal EIA Screening process. Based on the information submitted, the LPA’s assessment of the likely significance of potential environmental impacts concludes that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required. A statement of reasons is set out above.

	Signature	Date
Planning Officer		
Head of Development Management or Chief Executive		