

## National Nature Reserve Approved Body proposal

Section 35 1(c) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 empowers Natural England to approve organisations - Approved Bodies - to hold and manage NNRs.

Natural England's Non-Financial Scheme of Delegation currently assigns the authority to approve to NE Board for new Approved Bodies for new NNRs; and to the Chief Executive Officer for new Approved Bodies for existing NNRs.

This proposal should be completed by Natural England staff, setting out the past, present and likely future achievements of the organisation seeking Approved Body status as relevant to the nine NNR Management Standards. This will usually be summarised for the purpose of the Board or CEO as appropriate, but the full proposal serves as a record of our reasoning.

Note that this is a separate process to proposals to declare or extend NNRs.

### 1. Summary details

Name of organisation: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Lead contact: [Click here to enter text.](#)

NNR(s) or proposed NNR(s) linked to this proposal: [Click here to enter text.](#)

### 2. NNR management planning

Proper management planning is an essential basis for exemplary management and for integrating and meeting all relevant aspects of the standard. A plan has a legal aspect too, by providing the consents required for specified operations likely to damage the special features of SSSIs. The management plan, and changes to it, must therefore be consented by Natural England's Responsible Officer for the SSSI. Carrying out any of the listed operations without consent may be an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Has the organisation a good track record in successful management planning for protected areas and in keeping plans up-to-date? Have they got sufficient staffing and knowhow to write and review management plans? Have they reviewed management outcomes and kept records of key management activities undertaken?

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### 3. Exemplary management

The primary management of the NNR should reflect its status as being amongst the country's most important sites for nature conservation. Management should address the needs of its designated nature conservation features, other priority habitats and species and the functions required to support these. It should consider potential impacts on features due to climate change and responses.

If the organisation manages SSSIs, what is their past and current condition? Are they able and willing to manage to maintain or progress towards favourable condition? Does their management contribute to priority species and habitats initiatives as specified in Biodiversity 2020?

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#### **4. Contribution to safeguarding and restoring ecosystems beyond the site boundaries**

As core wildlife sites, NNRs potentially have an important function in restoring ecosystems, notably biodiversity, at a wider scale and in building resilience to climate change. This might be for example by acting as reservoirs and source sites for certain species, through demonstrating successful management practices, by coordinating action with others at a larger scale, or by inspiring others to take action. The nature and extent of this function depends on the features on the NNR and the concerted action of partners.

In managing other protected areas, does the organisation take account of their function in providing and supporting the restoration of ecosystems beyond the site boundaries and adaptation to climate change? Do they have the capacity, vision and willingness to do this on the NNR in question?

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#### **5. Providing opportunities for public enjoyment, quiet recreation and engagement**

Provision of public access and enjoyment can be combined with high standards of nature conservation. Visitors should be able to find out why an NNR is of special significance and have an opportunity to learn about and, wherever possible, directly experience these features. The information the public sees about a site should help reinforce their positive impressions and understanding of the NNR series. The nature and extent of public engagement will depend on the features at the NNR and the resources available

How does the organisation manage visitors on other sites? Can they strike a balance between nature conservation and visitor enjoyment? Have they a public website to provide information about the site or the capability of setting one up? Are they willing to use the title (or abbreviation) National Nature Reserve?

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## 6. Undertaking, enabling and communicating research

NNRs are often highly regarded as locations for research and study, especially in relation to the special features of the site. Information gathered from NNRs, including land management records, can contribute greatly to our understanding of the natural environment and how it is changing. NNR managers themselves rely on good access to data, historic and current, to inform management decisions. Good liaison with Local Record Centres (species records) can facilitate this flow of non-confidential knowledge.

Does the organisation positively consider opportunities and requests for monitoring, research and study into the natural environment, especially where they involve looking at long term trends. Do they make species records and the outputs of research available to the wider nature conservation and research community?

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## 7. Involving communities and stakeholders

Public participation in the management of a site, such as through volunteering, can be very effective in building public understanding and support for the natural environment. It is recognised that the extent to which community participation is feasible will depend upon the particular situation of each site. Management of an NNR should have regard to the views of stakeholders, particularly neighbours and local communities.

Does the organisation work with local communities and stakeholders, giving them the opportunity to contribute to how the objectives of the management plan are achieved and to direct management of the NNR. Do they offer volunteering opportunities?

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## 8. Collaboration and networking with other organisations

The collective contribution of NNRs to fulfil statutory purposes and wider policy goals is far greater than the individual contribution from each site. Sharing good management practice, scientific evidence and other information is beneficial and is encouraged.

Has the organisation had a good relationship with Natural England and other organisations? Do they support the collective promotion of NNRs? Do they work in partnership with other protected area managers to enhance site management and visitor experiences?

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## 9. Demonstrating exemplary conservation management to others

Many NNRs provide opportunities for developing and demonstrating environmental land management techniques that can help build skills and knowledge more widely amongst the sector and other land managers. The sites themselves can also act as 'reference points', providing examples of habitats at or exceeding favourable condition.

Does the organisation positively consider opportunities and requests for developing and demonstrating land management techniques where compatible with conservation objectives?

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## 10. Any other comments

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**Completed by:** Click here to enter text.

**Date:** Click here to enter text.

**Supported by (Area Manager):** Click here to enter text.

**Date:** Click here to enter text.

Please submit this form to the Estates Panel for assessment via [michael.woodhouse@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:michael.woodhouse@naturalengland.org.uk) and cc [debbie.mayhew@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:debbie.mayhew@naturalengland.org.uk)