

Summary: Intervention & Options

Department /Agency: Forestry Commission	Title: Impact Assessment of the Study of the Forestry Commission England Estate	
Stage:	Version: 1	Date: 19 May 2009
Related Publications: Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests (Defra, 2007); Delivery Plan 2008-2012: England's Trees, Woods and Forests (FC, Natural England, 2008).		

Available to view or download at:

<http://www.>

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What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?

The Forestry Commission England Estate makes an important contribution to the Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests. Many of the outputs of the estate display characteristics of public goods and, therefore, require public intervention. The challenge is to ensure that, in the long run, public ownership of the estate continues to add value by keeping down costs and taking opportunities to generate income, without reducing the ability to deliver public goods.

What are the policy objectives and the intended effects?

A study of the Forestry Commission Estate is underway, which aims to establish the long-term sustainable role of the estate; to identify ways of increasing the level of output from the public forest estate in England and to assess whether or not changes could be made that would enhance the ability of the estate to deliver on key Government objectives, including those set out in the Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests. The process should lead to the development of a framework for management decisions about the public forest estate.

What policy options have been considered? Please justify any preferred option.

At this stage, specific options have not been decided. The consultation document has, however, highlighted some trade-off issues that must be taken into account when forming options. For example, some actions aimed at generating income from the estate might conflict with the delivery of public benefits and, conversely, management of the estate for public benefit could, in some instances, restrict opportunities to generate income. The public consultation and economic study will provide guidance on final options.

When will the policy be reviewed to establish the actual costs and benefits and the achievement of the desired effects? A consultation will be launched on July 6 2008 and the final options will be presented to Ministers in February 2010.

Ministerial Sign-off For SELECT STAGE Impact Assessments:

I have read the Impact Assessment and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the leading options.

Signed by the responsible Minister:

.....Date:

Summary: Analysis & Evidence

Policy Option:	Description:
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COSTS	ANNUAL COSTS	Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups' The costs of running the estate include those relating to sustainable forest management; priority habitats species and heritage; recreation; urban community woodlands; capital and depreciation and the notional cost of capital. Together these amount to £37m (2009 prices).			
	One-off (Transition) Yrs				
	£				
	Average Annual Cost (excluding one-off)				
	£		Total Cost (PV)	£ 37m	
Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups'					

BENEFITS	ANNUAL BENEFITS	Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' GVA from forestry (SIC02) - £67m in 2007. Timber and other receipts - £53m in 2007/08. Non-market benefits of forestry - £297m per year (Willis et al 2003 and Crabtree 2005) if current shadow price of carbon is used. Tourism - £1.18bn per year (Hill et al 2003). All figures for FC England and in 2009 prices.			
	One-off Yrs				
	£				
	Average Annual Benefit (excluding one-off)				
	£		Total Benefit (PV)	£ 1597m	
Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'					

Key Assumptions/Sensitivities/Risks Willis et al. (2003) valued recreation, air pollution absorption benefits, landscape and amenity, biodiversity and carbon sequestration. Hill et al. (2003) valued tourism. The costs and benefits referred to above relate to the costs of administering policy in England and the benefits derived from the FC England Estate.

Price Base Year	Time Period Years	Net Benefit Range (NPV) £	NET BENEFIT (NPV Best estimate) £
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What is the geographic coverage of the policy/option?		England		
On what date will the policy be implemented?		2009-10		
Which organisation(s) will enforce the policy?		FC		
What is the total annual cost of enforcement for these organisations?		£ N/A		
Does enforcement comply with Hampton principles?		Yes		
Will implementation go beyond minimum EU requirements?		No		
What is the value of the proposed offsetting measure per year?		£ N/A		
What is the value of changes in greenhouse gas emissions?		£ 124m		
Will the proposal have a significant impact on competition?		No		
Annual cost (£-£) per organisation (excluding one-off)	Micro N/A	Small N/A	Medium N/A	Large N/A
Are any of these organisations exempt?	Yes/No	Yes/No	N/A	N/A

Impact on Admin Burdens Baseline (2005 Prices)				(Increase - Decrease)
Increase	£ 0	Decrease	£	Net £

Key: Annual costs and benefits: Constant Prices (Net) Present Value

Evidence Base (for summary sheets)

[Use this space (with a recommended maximum of 30 pages) to set out the evidence, analysis and detailed narrative from which you have generated your policy options or proposal. Ensure that the information is organised in such a way as to explain clearly the summary information on the preceding pages of this form.]

1 Introduction

A study is underway to examine the long-term sustainable role of the national forest estate in England. The objective is to identify changes that would increase the contribution from publicly-owned forests in England and that would enhance the capacity of the estate to deliver relevant public objectives, including those set out in the Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests.

2. Background

The national forest estate in England consists of 18% of the country's forests and woodlands and 2% of its land area, covering a total of 259,000 hectares. This comprises an extensive variety of forest types, including peri-urban, accessible and some remote rural areas. Forestry is a multi-functional activity. In addition to providing timber to internationally recognised standards for sustainable management, the estate offers a range of non-market outputs, ranging from recreation to biodiversity, carbon sequestration and air pollution absorption. Increasingly, these benefits – many of which exhibit characteristics of public goods and externalities - are being grouped under the heading of 'ecosystem services' to emphasise the contribution they make to human welfare.

The Government is committed to delivering public goods through public-sector ownership of and involvement in the management of England's forests and woodlands. The challenge facing the Government today is to add value by keeping down costs and taking opportunities to generate income, without jeopardising the provision of public benefits.

3 Forest policy

The Study of the long-term role of the public forest estate in England will take account of all of the elements outlined in the 2007 Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests (ETWF). These relate to sustainability, climate change, the natural environment, quality of life and business and markets. Since the launch of the Strategy, however, increasing emphasis has been placed on the capacity of woodlands to help us mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. Moreover, the contribution of trees in urban, as well as rural settings – including the role that woodlands play in urban regeneration – has added a further critical dimension to forest policy.

Broader policy events have helped to shape forest policy since 1988. The Rural White Paper (2000) set an expansionary tone for forestry. Priorities relevant to forestry in the Rural Strategy (2004) were economic and social regeneration, and enhancing the value of the countryside. Defra's five-year strategy (2004) gave a role for forestry in sustainable development through sustainable forest management, resource protection and delivering on the indicator for woodlands birds. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005) set a framework for forestry to deliver on climate change, renewable energy, natural resource protection, environmental enhancement and sustainable communities. Regional Forest Frameworks (RFFs) were developed to give regional priorities for forestry and enable implementation of policy to be tailored to the needs of localities. The Climate Change Act, passed in 2008, aims to tackle both the causes and consequences of climate change.

3 Evidence base

The Forestry Commission has commissioned a number of studies in recent years that attempt to place a value on ecosystem services generated by trees, woods and forests. These include economic analyses of forest policy objectives, economic valuations of social and environmental benefits of forestry and scientific research on the biophysical forest resource. These studies provide an evidence base that underpins the formation and delivery of government policy.

Some of the key studies are outlined below. A complete library of economic studies on forestry, funded by the Forestry Commission, can be found at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-6xrhul>.

Social and Environmental Benefits of Forestry in Great Britain (Willis et al 2003)

This major study, carried out for the Forestry Commission by a team of environmental economists, led by Professor Ken Willis of the University of Newcastle, provided estimates of the value of a range of non-market benefits generated by forestry in Great Britain. This was the first time that a single study attempted to estimate values for a fuller range of non-market benefits and to aggregate them. The annual value of the benefits was estimated at £1.2bn (in 2007-08 prices), with the largest contributions from recreation and biodiversity, followed by landscape and carbon sequestration. However, it should be noted that the value of carbon will have increased by a factor of over 10 since the study was carried out because Defra now advise the use of a much higher value for a tonne of carbon (based on the shadow price of carbon).

A number of policy implications can be drawn from the research. Firstly, the social and environmental benefits of forestry are very large but maximisation of these benefits requires government intervention as many display characteristics of public goods and externalities. Secondly, the scale of ecosystem service provided varies depending upon factors such as location, tree species and management practice. For example, woodland planting in peri-urban fringe areas is likely to maximise landscape benefits of woodland, especially if the woodlands are small, of irregular shape and broadleaved. Planting in peri-urban areas will also have the greatest impact in terms of pollution absorption and improved air quality. Third, there may be trade-offs in the provision of specific ecosystem services, for example, planning for air pollution absorption and for biodiversity benefits may not be compatible. It should also be noted that uncertainty exists surrounding the value of certain ecosystem services. Moreover, a number of social and environmental benefits have not been adequately quantified. These include effects on water quantity and quality, archaeological artefacts and air quality. Finally, the study focuses on woodlands of 2 hectares or more. However, smaller woodlands and other trees, such as hedgerow trees and trees in gardens also provide benefits, particularly relating to amenity in urban areas. Such benefits could be significant but were not evaluated in the study.

Economic Analysis of Forestry Policy in England (CJC Consulting, 2003)

This study examined the outputs required by society from woods and forests and how they can be best delivered. It examined the rationale for forestry policy as a means of furthering the sustainable development agenda, and investigated possible changes to forestry policy or strategic delivery mechanisms.

The report identified market failures related to recreation, carbon sequestration, watershed regulation, biodiversity conservation, landscape amenity, and air pollution reduction. It also recognised distortionary effects of other policies (specifically the CAP) and input failures on employment. It further noted the need for forest policy to meet international obligations and other government agendas, including the UK BAP, Rural Development Programmes and the

government's policy on sustainable development. The report found positive cost-benefit results across the wide range of forestry outputs, particularly where high levels of public goods are delivered. The cost-benefit ratio for different outputs depends to a large degree on local and regional conditions – this supports the case for a regional approach to the delivery of forest policy.

Review of Evidence for the Formulation of Forest Policy in England (CJC Consulting, 2005)

This report built upon earlier analysis by CJC (2005). It reviewed existing research on the valuation of forestry with the aim of ensuring that forestry policy in England was based upon the best possible evidence. The study also considered the cost-effectiveness of delivering non-market benefits through forestry.

The report concluded that virtually all forests and woodlands deliver multiple benefits. The size and mix of these benefits depends upon a number of factors, including species, design, management, location and use. The review also identified certain policy areas where forestry has the potential to contribute more strongly. These include health and social agendas. The report found that the net cost of intervention by Government in English forestry is around £60m per year; around 40% of this is spent on supporting the delivery of benefits from the public estate.

Economic Benefits of Accessible Green Spaces for Physical and Mental Health: A Scoping Study (CJC Consulting, 2005)

This scoping study aimed to critically review the existing research and evidence in this area and assess the cost-effectiveness of delivering health benefits through green space. The report also sought to identify possible interventions aimed at increasing the economic value of the health benefits of green space.

The study found that the health benefits from green space may be substantial. Greenspace is most valuable as a physical activity resource in an urban context, and it needs to be accessible, attractive and of sufficient size to facilitate activity. The evidence available on activity programmes that use existing greenspace indicates the potential for cost-effective health benefits if running costs are low, since the capital expenditure required for such projects is minimal compared with gyms and leisure complexes. However, it is important to consider the additionality of benefits generated by greenspace projects. It should be noted that there is a lack of information on the long-term benefits of programmes that encourage greenspace-based physical activity. As the evidence base is extended, it should be possible to create a more detailed classification of greenspace in relation to health benefits.

Valuing Forest Recreation Activities (Christie et al, 2006)

Values for non-market goods and services may vary substantially between different forest user groups. Therefore, the FC commissioned a study that included estimates of the recreation values of different types of forest user. The study, undertaken by a team of environmental economists and social researchers, led by Dr Mike Christie at Aberystwyth University, also considered the local economic impacts of forest recreation and changes in visitor welfare associated with improvements to facilities at visitor sites. The economic impacts (employment and income) were assessed using multiplier analysis; a combination of contingent behaviour analysis and choice experiments were used to examine how improvements to facilities affect welfare and a travel cost count model was used to estimate recreational values for specific user groups.

The study highlighted a number of important policy implications. In particular, the value of recreation to specialist user groups is significantly higher than that for non-specialist users. For example, mountain bikers derive a higher consumer surplus than general cyclists. Moreover,

the study allowed us to make recommendations about management of forests for certain specialist activities, for example, in terms of cycling, there was strong support for the creation and enhancement of mountain bike centres. It should be noted, however, that this study only considered per-trip (i.e. marginal) welfare gains; when making recommendations regarding forest facilities, it is important to take into account the number of potential users of these facilities.

Forests' Role in Tourism (Hill et al 2003)

This research assessed the economic contribution of forestry to tourism in Scotland, England and Wales. The report focused on 'forest-related expenditure', which comprises expenditure made during a day trip, when visiting a forest is one of the reasons for the trip, and 'forest-associated expenditure', which includes expenditure made by tourists during a trip to the countryside when tourists do not actually visit a forest. The latter effect arises from the influence of the forest on the choice of countryside area that the tourists visit. Forest-related tourism day visit expenditure was estimated at £2.3bn, around 13% of which was considered to be forest-associated expenditure.

A couple of policy implications can be drawn from the study. Firstly, the economic contribution of forestry to the GB tourism sector is very large. To maximise this contribution, there should be close integration of woodland and forestry policies with those on tourism, recreation and land use. Furthermore, there is a case for further development of multi-purpose forestry by both public and private organisations.

England Forestry Strategy – Implementation Process Report, 1998 – 2006 (Forestry Commission 2006)

This report reviewed progress in delivering the 1998 strategy and provided evidence for future revisions to it. It set out forestry's achievements in rural development, economic regeneration, recreation, access and tourism, and environment and conservation. It identified climate change, health and well being, and peri-urban and urban woodlands as policy areas of growing importance, and underlined the need to adapt to a changing policy framework.

In summary, the evidence shows that forests and woodlands contribute to wide-ranging government policy objectives that require intervention to overcome market failures. Forestry has been shown to be a cost-effective means of delivering the public goods and externalities associated with these objectives. There is limited evidence to compare the cost-effectiveness of provision on the public and private estates, although the public estate has successfully certified all its woodlands under UKWAS (which is based on international criteria for sustainable forest management) and has made a disproportionate contribution to providing recreational and tourist facilities.

4 The Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests

The Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests was published by Defra in 2007. The full Strategy can be downloaded from <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlifecountryside/forestry/strategy.htm>.

The Strategy builds on the 1998 Strategy and seeks to address a number of new policy issues. In particular, greater focus is given to the multiple ecosystem services provided by publicly-owned forests (including recreation, landscape and amenity and biodiversity), to the management of ancient and native woodlands and to land regeneration (e.g. brownfield sites). A further important dimension of the new Strategy is the role of trees and woodlands in helping us adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

There are five key aims of the new strategy. These are:

- To provide a resource of trees, woods and forests in places where they can contribute most in terms of social, economic and environmental benefits now and for future generations
- To ensure that existing and newly-planted woodlands are resilient to the impacts of climate change and also contribute to the way in which biodiversity and natural resources adjust to a changing climate
- To protect and enhance the environmental resources of water, soil, air, biodiversity and landscapes (both woodland and non-woodland), and the cultural and amenity value of trees and woodland
- To increase the contribution that trees, woods and forests make to the quality of life of those living in, working in or visiting England
- To improve the competitiveness of woodland businesses and promote the development of new or improved markets for sustainable woodland products and ecosystem services where this will deliver identifiable public benefits, nationally or locally, including the reduction of carbon emissions

The Strategy includes a commitment for Forestry Commission and Natural England to produce a Delivery Plan. This was launched on 15th December 2008. The plan is available at [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/eng-etwf-delivery-plan.pdf/\\$FILE/eng-etwf-delivery-plan.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/eng-etwf-delivery-plan.pdf/$FILE/eng-etwf-delivery-plan.pdf).

The Plan provides a national framework for delivering the aims of the Strategy. It identifies activities and actions to achieve this, including:

- Building connections between ideas, partners and resources
- Removing barriers to secure benefits more easily
- Targeting resources to where there is need
- Integrating delivery for greater efficiency
- Supporting effective market-based approaches

The published Delivery Plan is complemented by a spreadsheet detailing specific actions, available at [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/eng-etwf-actions-list.xls/\\$FILE/eng-etwf-actions-list.xls](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/eng-etwf-actions-list.xls/$FILE/eng-etwf-actions-list.xls).

5 Study of the Contribution of the Forest Estate Managed by Forestry Commission England

The Forestry Commission is currently undertaking a Study to examine the long-term sustainable role of the national forest estate in England and to identify changes that would improve the ability of the estate to deliver the priorities set out in the Strategy. As part of this process, the Forestry Commission, in collaboration with Defra will commission separate economic and social studies that will explore the contribution that the estate makes to society today and how it might sustainably serve society's long-term needs.

The Commission's England National Committee is the governing body for the Study, and has established a working group from relevant key stakeholders, including Defra. The Study is based on the Government's Sustainable Development Strategy *Securing the Future* and there will be a full public consultation. Following the consultation process, a report will be published on the responses. The Study Working Group will use the responses and other evidence gathered through the Study to prepare recommendations to the Forestry Commission England National Committee (ENC). ENC will subsequently submit recommendations to Ministers, who will decide the Government's response, which will then be taken forward by the Forestry Commission and its partners.

This is an appropriate time to assess the role of the estate. There are a number of new challenges facing forestry, in particular, relating to climate change and the need to consider how

the provision of public benefits can best be funded. Moreover, almost two years have passed since the launch of the Strategy and it is useful to consider how the estate might better respond to the aims set out in the Strategy, over the coming years.

The terms of reference for the Study are to: “consider the long-term sustainable role for the public forest estate, making recommendations about any necessary changes to improve its ability to deliver relevant priorities in the Strategy for England’s Trees, Woods and Forests and contribute to other Government objectives.”

The Study provides a national framework based on the priorities set out in the Strategy and other Government objectives. The Study does not set objectives at the level of individual woods, forests or localities. However, the national framework that it sets should reflect regional priorities and, in turn, the framework will influence these regional priorities.

6 Costs and benefits, including administrative burdens

At this stage, final options have not been specified. The data on costs and benefits provided in the section on *Summary: Analysis and Evidence* therefore refer to the total costs to the Forestry Commission of administering policy and regulation in England and the total benefits derived from the Forestry Commission England Estate. All figures are expressed in 2009 prices.

The costs relate to sustainable management of the estate, the notional cost of capital and expenditure on capital and depreciation, priority habitats species and heritage and recreation.

The benefits refer to Gross Value Added (GVA) from the national forest estate in England, Forestry Commission England income from timber and other receipts, the non-market benefits of forestry and income from tourism. GVA was based on data taken from the Annual Business Inquiry and Forestry Statistics, whilst timber and other receipts refers to operating income and income from recreation, as set out in the Annual Report and Accounts 2007-08.

Benefits from tourism were estimated at £1.18bn, from Hill et al. (2003). To derive this value, the disaggregated figure for tourism expenditure in England was multiplied by 0.5, as an estimated 50% of total forest-related tourism expenditure in England goes to the FC. The 50% estimate was derived from the England Leisure Visits Survey and the FC on-site surveys. The end value demonstrates the wider effect of woodlands on economic activity in rural areas.

Based largely on Willis et al (2003), the non-market benefits were estimated at £297m per year. This includes recreation, air pollution absorption, biodiversity and landscape and amenity. The value for carbon absorption was calculated by applying the current shadow price of carbon to the quantity of carbon stored on the estate and discounting to derive an annualised figure. Values associated with other objectives of the Strategy, including improvements to productivity, health and well being and urban woodlands, were not quantified by Willis et al (2003) but are expected to be substantial. The Willis et al. (2003) study also does not capture the full benefits from woodlands through mitigation and adaptation to climate change; for example, wood offers carbon savings as a substitute for more carbon-intensive materials. Moreover, the estate provides considerable opportunities for investment in renewable energy, such as windpower. Finally, no quantitative evidence exists to assess the contribution woodlands make to education and the role that forestry plays in regulating soil and water quality and flood management.

7 Risk, uncertainty and unintended consequences

There have been important developments in government policy that are relevant to the public forest estate, for example in relation to climate change. If the opportunity is not taken to analyse the contribution of the estate, there is a risk that the estate’s contribution to government objectives may not be maximised in future. Measures which would enhance the ability of the estate to deliver the aims and priorities set out in the Strategy (See Section 4) might not be enacted.

In the current economic climate, it is important to examine whether there are opportunities to generate additional income streams or minimise costs. Failure to carry out the Study could result in such opportunities being missed.

8 Specific Impact Test Outcomes

Competition

The focus of the public estate is to correct market failures by securing the provision of public benefits without creating undue distortions. This is explicit in the fifth aim of the Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests, which is "to improve the competitiveness of woodland businesses and promote the development of new markets for sustainable woodland products and ecosystem services, where this will deliver public benefits".

The Forestry Commission England Estate underpins activity in private firms in a number of ways. Forest management operations on the estate are often carried out by private contractors and recreation provides opportunities for franchises and concessions for private companies. Effectively, the role of the public forest estate is to provide a green infrastructure on which business opportunities can be developed.

With regard to timber production, public ownership of forests and woodlands reduces fluctuations in the market, as the supply of timber is not cut when the price falls. This provides stability in the processing sector and supports downstream industries.

Small firms impact test

As stated above, the estate creates business opportunities for small firms such as forest contractors and leisure facility providers by providing the green infrastructure on which private operations can be undertaken. Moreover, under the Forestry Act, the Forestry Commission can engage in joint ventures with the private sector, which can create opportunities for small business development.

Legal Aid

The process does not involve any changes to legislation or legal aid.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable forest management is the cornerstone of forest policy, underpinning all activity that takes place on the national forest estate. Standards for the sustainable management of all forests and woodlands in the UK are set out in the UK Forestry Standard. The Standard provides a framework for guiding and monitoring forestry policy. It is linked to international protocols for sustainable forestry, such as the Helsinki Guidelines and the Pan-European Criteria. In addition, all Forestry Commission England woodlands are certified under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS), which is based on international criteria.

Carbon assessment

Tackling climate change is a major policy objective of the estate. This is in line with the Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests, which aims "to ensure that woodlands are resilient to the impacts of climate change and contribute to the way in which biodiversity and natural resources adjust to a changing climate".

Other environmental issues

Protecting and enhancing natural and cultural resources is one of the aims of the public forest estate in England. In addition to woods and forests, the estate includes other areas of internationally important habitats, such as heathland and bog. There are 67,000ha of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on the estate. Moreover, there are also approximately 900 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, which are protected through plans agreed with English Heritage. The Forestry Commission has stewardship of two ancient royal forests, the Forest of Dean and the New Forest, and actively promotes their heritage. The public forest estate also includes the national arboreta at Westonbirt and Bedgebury.

Health Impact Assessment

The aim is to increase the contribution of woodlands to quality of life for people living, working in and visiting England. Recent economic analysis indicates that woodlands can provide significant benefits for health and well being. (See <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-6aceel>). Crabtree (2005), for example, found that greenspace is a major resource for physical activity, especially walking, running and cycling. He suggested that regular physical activity is highly effective in the prevention of and as a therapeutic intervention for existing illness, both physical and psychological. Active woods is a national drive by the Forestry Commission to promote the vast range of health and fitness opportunities offered by Britain's woodlands. Hundreds of events have been organised across England, including cycling events, such as 'Bike and Bash!' at Haldon Forest Park (see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/ourwoods.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/EnglandDevonNoForestHaldonForestParkBikeBash?opendocument>) and walking events, such as 'Fit and Green 3' at the New Forest (see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/ourwoods.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/EnglandHampshireNoForestNewForestFitandGreen3?opendocument>).

Race/disability/gender equality

There will be no significant adverse impacts on the grounds of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief or age. An interim equality impact assessment has been carried out and will be available shortly.

Human Rights

The process conforms with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Rural proofing

The majority of woodlands and forests lie in rural areas. Forest policy has adopted a stronger urban component in recent years in recognition of the important public benefits provided by trees and woodlands in towns and cities. More formal rural proofing assessments will be performed as required, as the policy options are developed.

References

- Forestry Commission (1998) *The England Forestry Strategy*, Forestry Commission, Cambridge
- Willis. K. et al. (2003) *The Social and Environmental Benefits of Forestry*, report to the Forestry Commission
- Hill et al. (2003) *Forests' Role in Tourism*
- CJC Consulting (2003) *Economic Analysis of Forestry Policy in England*, report to Defra and H.M. Treasury. <http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/evaluation/forestry/default.asp>

- H. M. Treasury (2003) *The Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government*, HM Treasury, London. www.hm-treasury.gov.uk
- Defra (2004) *Rural Strategy 2004*, Defra, London
- CJC Consulting (2005) *Review of Evidence for the Formulation of Forestry Policy in England*, report to Defra
- CJC Consulting (2005) *Economic Benefits of Accessible Green Spaces for Physical and Mental Health: A Scoping Study*
- Christie et al. (2006) *Valuing Forest Recreation Activities*
- ONS (2007) *Inter-departmental Business Register*, Office for National Statistics

Specific Impact Tests: Checklist

Use the table below to demonstrate how broadly you have considered the potential impacts of your policy options.

Ensure that the results of any tests that impact on the cost-benefit analysis are contained within the main evidence base; other results may be annexed.

Type of testing undertaken	<i>Results in Evidence Base?</i>	<i>Results annexed?</i>
Competition Assessment	Yes	Yes/No
Small Firms Impact Test	Yes	Yes/No
Legal Aid	Yes	Yes/No
Sustainable Development	Yes	Yes/No
Carbon Assessment	Yes	Yes/No
Other Environment	Yes	Yes/No
Health Impact Assessment	Yes	Yes/No
Race Equality	Yes	Yes/No
Disability Equality	Yes	Yes/No
Gender Equality	Yes	Yes/No
Human Rights	Yes	Yes/No
Rural Proofing	Yes	Yes/No

Annexes