

# Endorsements

**This is an old version of the page**

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For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#) .

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## 1.. Seeking endorsement for options or capital items outwith their target area.

### **Introduction**

In the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme, many management options and some capital items are spatially targeted. This means they are only available in parts of the country where they will deliver the greatest benefit.

You can find out which options are available on the holdings that form part of your farm business using our targeting tool (link below). Please note that updates to spatial targeting may change the options that you're eligible to apply for.

### [Targeting tool](#)

In exceptional circumstances, you may apply for a management option or capital item that is not targeted on your holding. However, you must meet the criteria in Table 1 (below) and you must obtain an endorsement before submitting your AECS application, as explained below.

Requests for endorsements should be made to NatureScot (formerly SNH).

### **Protected Areas (designated sites)**

These are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and European sites. European sites are Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); they were previously known as Natura sites.

If you wish to carry out management to benefit an SSSI and / or European site, you can apply for any management options (with the exception of the Hen Harrier Grassland Management option which is only available in Orkney) or capital items which will benefit the special features of the site, even if they do not appear on your list of targeted options.

This includes circumstances where the work that will benefit the site's features takes place on your holding but partially or wholly outside the site itself as long as the work can be justified as being required to benefit the notified features of the site.

You will need to submit an endorsement from NatureScot alongside your application. This needs to confirm that the option or capital item you have chosen will benefit the features of the designated site.

You can visit the NatureScot [SiteLink website](#) to check the location of the designated site.

You are strongly advised to seek advice from NatureScot before drafting an application for a designated site. If you do not, and NatureScot has significant issues with the management you propose for the designated site, this may prejudice the success of your application.

### Contact NatureScot

If you include ineligible items in your application it will be rejected and you should first read the scheme guidance on [designations](#) before applying.

You should also read the terms and conditions laid out in [How to Apply](#) guidance.

### How to request an endorsement

If you wish to seek an endorsement then you must submit a request to NatureScot.

You will need to request an endorsement in plenty of time, to ensure NatureScot has time to assess it and respond to you before the AECS application window closes.

If you are permitted an endorsement, you must submit this as a supporting document alongside your AECS application.

Please use the form below if you are requesting an endorsement from NatureScot.



[Request to NatureScot for endorsement of a management option or capital item \(MS Word, Size: 47.9 kB\)](#)

doc\_external\_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/AECS-EDIT-2021---Endorsement-form---22-January-2021.docx>

Check Table 1 below to see whether you meet the requirements to seek an endorsement.

In the [endorsement request form \(MS Word, Size: 47.9 kB\)](#), you are asked to explain briefly how each option or capital item meets the criteria for endorsement. NatureScot will clarify whether you need to provide any further evidence.

In most cases the endorsement will confirm that the options you have selected are eligible, will benefit the objectives of management and that the location in which you wish to carry out the management is appropriate.

**Please note:** If you have already received a NatureScot (SNH) endorsement for your 2015 or 2016 round contract, for the same option(s) on the same land, please submit this with your 2021 application. In such cases, you will not need to seek a new endorsement.

## Table 1

Management option or capital item	Criteria for endorsement outside target areas	Endorsing organisation
Any management option or capital item to benefit a designated site (SSSI or Natura site)	The choice and location of option(s) and/or capital item(s) will benefit the feature(s) of the designated site	NatureScot

## [2. Seeking endorsement for Species-rich Grassland Management or Habitat Mosaic Management options in hill or upland rough grazing land](#)

Please use the form below to submit a request for endorsement after taking account of the criteria in Table 2.



[Request to NatureScot for endorsement of a management option or capital item \(MS Word, Size: 47.9 kB\)](#)

doc\_external\_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/AECS-EDIT-2021---Endorsement-form---22-January-2021.docx>

## Table 2

Management option	Criteria for endorsement	Endorsing organisation
Species rich grassland Habitat Mosaic	<p>If the land proposed for management under either option is hill and upland rough grazing, you can only apply for these options if you are awarded an endorsement from NatureScot.</p> <p>The endorsement application requires you to provide supporting evidence that target habitats are present, by submitting either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a Phase 1 habitat survey that demonstrates the presence of the target habitats,</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an existing National Vegetation Classification (NVC) survey demonstrating the site contains the target species</li> </ul> <p>This evidence must accompany your Endorsement form.</p>	NatureScot

## Recent changes

Section	Change
<a href="#">1. Seeking endorsement for options or capital items outwith their target area.</a>	New section title and updated NatureScot Endorsement Form. Also updated various links throughout section.
<a href="#">2. Seeking endorsement for Species-rich Grassland Management or Habitat Mosaic Management options in hill or upland rough grazing land</a>	New section title and updated NatureScot Endorsement Form.

## Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)

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