

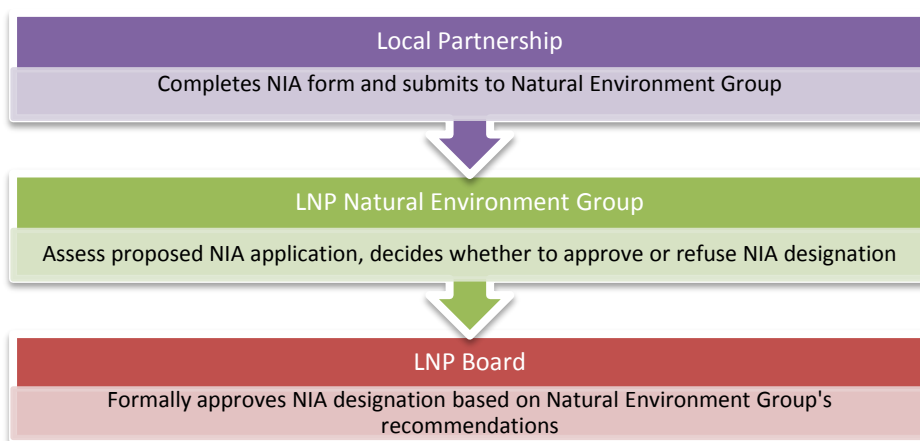
Nature Improvement Areas

Application process

The management of NIA designation will be the responsibility of the Natural Environment Group of the North East England Nature Partnership. They will respond to requests made by partnerships who can demonstrate that real improvements under the main criteria will be achieved. The North East has many areas of ecological significance and this process will ensure that resources and activity are focussed where there are opportunities for change and delivery of multiple benefits. There are no set national criteria for locally designated NIA's however research has been carried out into approaches used by other LNPs in the country and the recommended process is consistent within other approaches.

Approval Process

It is recommended that the following process is used for the designation of Local NIAs:



Proposed criteria

1. Biodiversity

The proposed NIA should contain all components of an ecological network

Identification of priorities for improvement:

- Core areas (National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, and other semi-natural areas of high ecological quality)
- Main habitat types
- Main species and distribution
- Corridors and stepping stones (current and potential)
- Potential restoration areas and buffer zones

2. Ecosystem Services

The proposed NIA should look to improve ecosystem services across it's area

Identification of potential improvements to ecosystem services:

- Provisioning
- Regulating
- Supporting

- Cultural

3. Socio-economic benefits

The proposed NIA should look to deliver a range of socio-economic benefits

Identification of potential benefits:

- Public access
- Tourism
- Farming
- Local Communities

4. Partnership Working

Description of the NIA partnership, its composition and levels of support

- Vision
- Partners