ENVIRONMENT AND LAND USE

18 JANUARY 2022

REFERENCE

GN05-22

DEFRA FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES (ENGLAND ONLY)

(This Guidance Note replaces GN31-21 which should be deleted from your files)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grant scheme, opened for applications on 1st July 2021. The scheme provides funding to farmers and land managers in England's 44 Protected Landscapes in England including National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Norfolk Broads. There is a total of £50 million available over the next 3 financial years to March 2024. Each of the 44 Protected Landscape bodies have been allocated a proportion of the funding and are responsible for awarding funding for projects in their area. FiPL will fund projects that must deliver on at least one of 4 themes:

Theme	Projects should deliver
Nature	▪ A greater area of wildlife-rich habitat ▪ Greater connectivity between habitats ▪ Better management of existing habitats for biodiversity ▪ Increased biodiversity
Climate change	▪ More carbon being stored, sequestered or both ▪ Reduced flood risk ▪ A better understanding among farmers, land managers and the public about what different habitats and land use can contribute to climate change ▪ A landscape that is more resilient to climate change
People	▪ More opportunities for people to explore, enjoy and understand the landscape ▪ More opportunities for diverse audiences to explore, enjoy and understand the landscape ▪ Greater public engagement in land management e.g. through volunteering
Place	▪ Enhancing or reinforcing the quality and character of the landscape

	▪ Historic structures and features being conserved, enhanced or interpreted more effectively ▪ An increase in the resilience of nature-friendly sustainable farm businesses, which contributes to a more thriving local economy

Examples of potential projects include:

- Conserving historic features on a farm, such as lime kilns or lead mining heritage.
- Supporting a locally branded food initiative that promotes the links between the product and the landscape in which it is produced.
- Replacing stiles with gates on public footpaths, to promote easier access.
- Action to reduce carbon emissions on a farm.
- Gathering data and evidence to help inform conservation and farming practice.
- Promoting connectivity between habitats.

2. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Key information:

- Key dates:
    - Opened 1 July 2021
    - Projects must end by 31 March 2024.
- Rolling application window- applications can be submitted until the programme closes on the 31st of March 2024.
- Funding is for infrastructure or activities that deliver under the 4 themes- climate change, nature, people and place.
- Level of grant and conditions:
    - Successful applicants could receive up to 100% of their project costs if they do not make a commercial gain from the project.
    - If a commercial gain will be made from the project, the programme will fund a proportion of the costs, depending on how much the cost will benefit the business.
    - Funded capital infrastructure and machinery must be maintained for 5 years from the completion date.
    - The requirement to continue facilitating a funded activity, such as a volunteer group, will cease at the end of the programme on 31st March 2024.
- Application process:
    - Applicants should contact their local Protected Landscape to register their interest in applying for funding. Each Protected Landscape has a Farming in Protected Landscape Officer to guide applicants through the application process.
    - Application forms are available from the Farming in Protected Landscape Officer.
    - Applications can be made by individual businesses or multiple businesses can submit a joint application.
- Application assessment:
    - Applications with a value of less than £5,000 will be assessed by a senior member of the Protected Landscape Team.
    - Assessment panels will meet every 6-8 weeks throughout the application window to assess projects with a value of over £5,000.
    - Applications are competitive are scored against the following criteria:
        - Project outcomes (40% weighting)
        - Value for money (20%)
        - Sustainability or legacy of projects (20%)
        - Ability of the applicant/s to deliver the project (20%).

- Management control:
  - Applicants must manage all of the land included in the application, have control of all the proposed activities or have the necessary written consents from the parties who manage and control the land.
  - The scheme may provide support for activities on land outside but adjacent to the Protected Landscapes, provided they demonstrate benefit.
- Further guidance on the scheme can be found here.

Relationship to other schemes

Applicants that are participating in existing agri-environment schemes, such as Countryside Stewardship will be able to apply for FiPL, provided that the same activity is not being paid for twice. FiPL is separate to the Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes.
Members should note the possibility of overlap between FiPL and the Farming Investment Fund, which provides funding for farm and forestry equipment, as well as funding larger infrastructure projects, such as the construction of farm reservoirs. If you are looking to pursue a project that could be eligible for funding under both schemes, it is worth comparing the two, as the proportion of funding that is offered under either scheme could differ.

3. CLA ADVICE

- This scheme is a departure from the prescriptive schemes that applicants may be used to. Applicants have freedom to design their project provided their applications satisfy at least one of the 4 criteria. This is an opportunity to receive funding for projects that might not quality for other spending.
- Applicants can use Magic Maps to check whether or not they are in a Protected Landscape.
- The scheme is competitive and operates on a first-come-first-served basis. To enhance your chances of success:
  - Act now and submit your applications as soon as possible. The scheme is not designed in a way that will reward last minute applications.
  - Applicants should familiarise themselves with the grant criteria and understand how their application will be scored.
  - Projects must support the objectives of your Protected Landscape's management plan. Applicants should contact the local Protected Landscape team at an early stage to discuss the Protected Landscape's management plan and how the project could help deliver its objectives.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

The Defra Future Farming and Countryside Programme has a number of other schemes to support agricultural productivity, animal health and welfare, and environmental land management. These schemes are summarised in the CLA Guidance Note *Overview of Defra Agriculture Transition Schemes*. There are individual CLA Guidance notes for many of the schemes that each provide key information and advice on whether and how to apply.

If you have any questions, please contact your regional office or the national team. If you wish to keep up to date with changes in Defra Future Farming Programme please register for their email blog here.

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