

Mon 28th November 2022

## Application Process

1. Stocking Rate: Does the WFSR calculation for Tier 2 access to ACRES include any slurry that he has imported?  
Yes, Imports and Exports are factored in to give the final NPH stocking rate.
2. For Rare Breeds – where a farmer has 2 livestock species – is it essential to upload membership of both breed societies in order that both breeds are eligible to be claimed for payment? (One will be sufficient for Tier 1 status).  
Yes, You must Upload membership of all breeds that you wish to receive payment on at time of application.
3. A new Native Tree Area Scheme is being proposed in the Forestry Programme 2023 - 2027. Is this compatible with the tree planting elements of the ACRES scheme?  
Responded in previous Q&A (Q6 18<sup>TH</sup> Nov 2022). Refer to section 15 'ACRES and Forestry' in the Schemes Terms and Conditions.
4. Eligibility for BISS – where a parcel (less than 1 ha) is full of Trees at 4m x 4 m spacing = 16m<sup>2</sup> - Will this be eligible for BISS?  
If Planting of Trees is the action chosen in a LPIS parcel, Normal BISS eligibility rules will apply. If there is more than 50% of parcel that is grazable then the entire parcel should be eligible for BISS. BISS terms and Conditions will determine eligibility for BISS.  
Where the action Tree Belts for Ammonia Capture from Farmyards is selected as a split parcel, the area will be digitised into a new LPIS number and the entire LPIS parcel should be eligible for BISS.
5. If Breeding Waders and Geese and Swan on a farm – No 49 from 1/2/7 Nov confirms we can choose LIG or EGP for Breeding Waders as Tier 1 and ignore Geese and Swan. Q is can we undertake Geese and Swan action and ignore Breeding Waders?  
Yes. Breeding wader should be considered first, but if those actions do not suit the applicant, then it is ok to choose Geese and Swan and not Breeding wader actions. If they deliver the minimum area for Geese and Swan action to be eligible, they will still be considered for Tier 1.
6. In Natura parcels where erecting a new fence is listed as an activity requiring consent for that specific SAC/SPA, split parcels can only be created where an existing defined field boundary is already present. – please confirm that this does not include NHA and pNHA (which are not Natura).  
It is the advisors responsibility to check if fencing is an activity that is allowed on any designated land. If prior consent is required on a designated NHA site, then the same rule would apply

7. Company: Can a Company apply for ACRES?

Yes

8. RFP and Company T&Cs say: *An RFP with a multiplier of 1 may, subject to prior approval, revert to an individual herd number, but may not reconstitute in the form of a company.* Question is Can an RFP with a multiplier of 2, subject to prior approval reconstitute to include a company?

No. Refer to the beginning of section 10.8 *'A registered farm partnership (RFP) who is participating in the ACRES may dissolve for the purposes of reconstituting as a new RFP but only where holding multipliers remain the same. An RFP with a multiplier of 1 may, subject to prior approval, revert to an individual herd number, but may not reconstitute in the form of a company. Section 14 below which deals with Contract Revision refers.'*

### Area Based Actions

9. GLAMS will now allow me to select the GLAS riparian Zone as an ACRES Riparian Zone even though the lands were not declared as Grassland on the 2022 BPS. Has this changed as I could not select the parcel for this action previously? I also refer to Q74 on Q&A of 31st October which states the following: GLAS Riparian Margins are blocked out of ACRES because of their Crop Code in BPS – neither Grassland nor Arable – will this be changed? It is only blocked if the margin was digitised as a separate parcel and declared Riparian Zone on BPS. There are no plans to change these validations on GLAM.

This was changed as outlined in circular No. 13 and Revised Specifications 28/11/2022. Can now be selected on a parcel declared as grassland and Riparian Zone.

10. Where a farm is partially CP and has geese and swans, do they only have to select half of the geese and Swan mapped area outside of the CP to be eligible for this action? E.g., 18 ha farm, with 10 ha in cp, and 8 outside, whole farm covered in G&S, is 4 out of the 8 ha enough to select to be eligible for the action?

When calculating the 50% requirement, it is only the area under the mapped layer in arable or grassland LIPS parcels that should be taken into account. Commonage or CP forage parcels are not included in the calculation.

11. Do you need evidence of a grazing enterprise in order to choose LIG?

No

12. In relation to the Protection of archaeological monuments where a burial ground is listed, and the circle appears around it on GLAMS but there is nothing visible on the ground can this be included as this particular site is of huge historical significance it would seem that not to be included because there is nothing visible on the ground is going against the information available.

See q 56 on Q & A from 17th October. Monuments must be visible on ground.

13. Can lime be applied to lands entered for management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse?

Yes

14. Geese and Swans-the whole farm is in geese and swans. The cattle have to be off the land/farm for 6 months? How will the farmer comply with the 7-month requirement for ANC and BISS?

The action is voluntary. The only mandatory General Action is Commonage. It is up to each farmer to ensure they can meet the requirements for each action. The Geese and Swans action does not have to be delivered on every parcel on the holding. The amount committed to the action must meet 50% of the Geese and Swans mapped area or 19ha whichever is the lower.

15. For a Riparian Zone mapped adjacent to a Waterline/Single Streamline showing on the GLAM layers. Where an area of exclusion (Scrub) 0.5ha is immediately adjacent to the Waterline/Streamline and a further 0.5ha (of which is MEA) is drawn the overall mapped area now referenced is 1ha. As per indications this hectare will be fully eligible for BISS in 2022. Can it please be confirmed that the area paid on as a Riparian Zone through ACRES will be 1ha? The RBZ LPIS parcel will be digitised for the 2023 BISS application. The Eligible Hectare will be determined in BISS for that parcel in 2023, If the area of scrub in the parcel is below 50% then the entire parcel should be eligible. The eligible area for ACRES payment will be the lower of the Eligible Hectare or the Claimed area for that parcel in the 2023 BISS application. Additionally, is it only waterlines/streamlines that show on the GLAM layers that are eligible for selecting a riparian zone where 10 trees are planted to enter as a Tier 2 applicant or can in situ drainage ditches be included as priority if they are in site suitable PIP zones? They can only be created adjacent to small streams, surface drains, rivers, lakes or ponds therefore in situ drainage ditches can be selected for Riparian Buffer Zones and by planting trees in Riparian buffer Zone they may be considered for Tier 2. Ranking and Selection may apply.

16. Please confirm that a CP applicant can dispose of some OWNED commonage and OWNED private CP forage lands in 2023. For example, an elderly farmer that wants to sell/ lease some of his holding next year. Just to confirm that he's not compelled to keep all his Owned CP forage land that was in Bps 2022 for the 5 years.

An ACRES CP participant can dispose of land, Once the land is declared in the 2023 BISS application it may be considered ACRES contract. If the land is disposed of (sold, leased out or rented out) and has been in receipt of ACRES payment then clawback may apply. If a farmer disposes of land in early 2023 and does not include that land in the 2023 BISS application, then clawback would not apply as the land would not have been included in the participant's 2023 ACRES claim for payment.

17. Management of Intensive Grassland next to a watercourse- is there a stocking rate that must be maintained on the farm when you select this action? And if yes, is that stocking rate allowed to be maintained through temporary grazing of another farmer's livestock or

must the farmer own the livestock himself? [See FAQ of 10th Oct. No, the minimum stocking rate of over 100kg N per Hectare from grazing livestock only applicable to 2021 for Tranche 1.](#)

18. Can home-grown seed be used for WBC and environmental management of fallow land?  
[Home-grown seed is allowed for WBF but not for Catch Crops.](#)

19. Riparian Zone: Where an applicant used a Tams sheep fence to fence the EXTERNAL boundary of a field 2 years ago, and now part of this field is to be used as a Riparian buffer zone and will be separated from the non-buffer zone part of the field with a new fence in 2023 (not Tams grant aided). Is this allowed, seeing that the new fence in 2023 is the one that creates the buffer zone and is not Tams grant aided. (point 4 page 90). [The fence used for stock proofing and creating the RBZ must meet the requirements. The TAMS funded fence from 2 years ago is not an eligible fence. If the new fence would need to be in addition to the TAMS fence.](#)

20. I refer to question 52 and answer provided on Q & A dated 7/11/22 and 16/11/22. It gives the impression that a riparian zone can be located on a natura site adjoining a watercourse (water line or water single streamline) where the new fence is located outside the natura area. I have tried to map such a situation and the GLAMS mapping won't accept the action and rejects it on the basis that it can't be located on natura designated site. Could you please give clarification on this?

[GLAM will not allow you to select a Riparian Buffer Zone on an area that is Natura. As answered in Q52. 7/11& 16/11/22 If you split the parcel the split parcel that doesn't contain the Natura layer must be adjacent to the watercourse for that split parcel to be eligible for RBZ.](#)

21. Geese & Swans. If designated Geese and Swan grazing parcels are composed of rough grazing, must the farmer meet the minimum stocking with either bovines or ovines or can the grass be left ungrazed - uncut annually (available to fowl Oct to March)?

[Average sward heights as set out in the Specifications must be met and can either be achieved from grazing or mowing.](#)

22. Does a Riparian zone need to run adjacent to the watercourse/drain at all times or can a 20m x 20m area (adjacent to the WC) link a larger area from the middle of a field that takes in .5ha for example but would not have direct contact to the WC along the full linear length of the plot drawn?

[The RBZ must be adjacent to the watercourse or drain, however for irregular shaped fields it would be acceptable if part of the field was directly running beside the watercourse.](#)

23. Natura Lands with water line or water single streamline: Where a parcel of Extensively grazed pasture is selected on a natura site which also contains a Water line or water single streamline could you please confirm that the fencing of the watercourse is not mandatory.

[Acres Requirements Point 3 Page 20. It is a core requirement of certain area-based actions that when a watercourse is present on or adjacent to the parcel, bovines are not permitted](#)

to access the watercourse. Where no natural barrier exists, the watercourse must be fenced at least 1.5m from the top of the bank when bovines are present (drinking points are not permitted). Watercourses applicable to this requirement are defined as any body of water that is marked on GLAM as OSi Water line and Water single streamline. If this is in a Natura 2000 designated site, fencing of the watercourse is not mandatory.

24. Riparian Buffer Zones – Where one parcel touches a watercourse, but the adjoining parcel (sometimes in the same field) is deemed to influence flow paths through the first parcel – can it also be selected as a Riparian Buffer Zone?

As this LPIS plot is not adjacent to the watercourse, it is not eligible.

25. Late Mown Meadow - if the box wasn't ticked at application stage, will this rule you out from selecting the late cutting option in any year during ACRES?

No not ticking will not rule out a participant from selecting late meadow bonus. The specification outlines in point 3 of Late meadow bonus requirement for LIG and LIPG (Page 63 & 65) that the claim will be made through Agrisnap.

26. Is land next to the sea, eligible for Management of Intensive Grassland next to a watercourse (if site is suitable) or Riparian Strips / Zones?

No as it does not meet the site suitability requirements in the Specifications.

27. Can any land within the LIPG layer be selected for LIPG – even if not peaty? If this does not score >4 and receives no payment in any of the contract years – can you confirm it will still get Tier 2 prioritisation?

To select LIPG action, the field(s) must intersect the Designated Raised Bog 500m buffer map and have been declared as low input permanent pasture, permanent pasture or traditional hay meadow on the 2022 BPS application. The action is targeted at land that surrounds Designated Raised Bogs. Once the field intersects the layer then it can be selected. Once the action meets the site suitability requirements and a scorecard is submitted in years 1,3 and 5 as required it, will not be removed from ACRES because of the score achieved, and will still receive Tier 2.

28. Where LIG and EGP are side by side with a hedge in between which is not stockproof - as the management of both could be the exact same (as in this case) and the hedge is a marker – is there a need for a wire fence?

No need for a fence. The hedgerow would satisfy the requirement for each action to have a defined field boundary from the commencement of the contract as long as the hedge provided a defined field boundary along the entire length in question.

29. For Geese and Swans – are Multi Species Swards suitable?

Multi Species Swards are not excluded and if the requirement of having an average sward of between 5cm and 12cm by the 1<sup>st</sup> of October annually are met, it will be eligible.

30. Protection of Archaeological monuments – Grassland. The Specification says, ‘Remove all encroaching vegetation (excluding established healthy trees) on/near the monument’ and ‘Larger trees should be pruned to above head height to open up access to the site or monument’. AS the aim of this option is to control certain types of re-seeded or quickly colonising trees and invasive woody plants can you confirm a farmer undertaking this action does not have to cut a line of mature trees around a monument – which could be a huge task requiring professional services?

See requirement 3 for this action in the Specification. Removing established healthy trees is not required.

31. Tree Planting: Can of the 3 Tree Planting actions be located within 60 m of a family-owned neighbouring dwelling house? (Many family-owned dwelling houses not owed by the applicant are in farmyards which would suit the Tree Belts for Ammonia).

Houses must be owned by the applicant.

32. Straw Incorporation Measure - there is a conflict between Answer 27 from Answers from 31 Oct and a response from the SIM section.

Can payments be received from the SIM and ACRES Catch Crops?

ACRES payment can be made for Overwinter Stubble and Catch crops in a parcel that received a Straw Incorporation Measure Payment. The parcel must meet the requirements for the ACRES actions to be eligible.

33. **Wild Bird Food** – Has the minimum size of parcel changed to 0.04 (from 0.25 in Point 3 in requirements on Specification)? As outlined in specification requirement 3. the minimum parcel size is 0.25Ha. Or is this only where a parcel less than 0.25 ha adjoins another parcel of Wild Bird Food so the area on the ground is actually larger than 0.25 ha?

The minimum parcel size for Winter Bird Food is 0.25 ha, this has not changed. Any parcel less than 0.25 ha at any point during the contract will be deemed ineligible.

#### 34. **Natura or Breeding Waders**

Where a farmer has at least 0.5 ha under the Natura or Breeding Wader mapped layer - to get Tier 1 status, please confirm:

- a. That the minimum required to be undertaken is the minimum required for that action. Example: Minimum of 0.5 ha for Extensively Grazed Pasture?

The individual action must be eligible so for Extensively Grazed Pasture there must be at least 0.25Ha delivered (same for LIG)

- b. That this minimum of 0.25 ha must be undertaken on the Natura or Breeding Wader mapped layer?

The applicant must have had the 0.5Ha in Breeding wader or Natura area in 2021 BPS and at least one of the applicable actions must be selected on an area intersecting the Breeding Wader or Natura mapped area. The action selected must meet the requirement as set out in the specification for the chosen action.

### 35. Geese and Swan

#### Example:

20 ha Farm with 10 ha under the Geese and Swan mapped layer. At least 50% (10 ha) must be undertaken as a Geese and Swan action - say 6 ha. This 6 ha can be undertaken in a parcel or newly split parcel that intersects with the Geese and Swan mapped layer – please confirm that all 6-ha undertaken as Geese and Swans does not have to be under the Geese and Swan mapped layer.

All of the 6Ha does not have to be under the Geese and Swan layer. The action has to be selected on a whole parcel or a split of parcel that contains an intersect of the Geese and Swan layer. Therefore, the Geese and Swan action could be selected on a parcel that has a small intersect leaving another parcel which has a larger area of Geese and Swan layer not chosen for the action.

### 36. For those who don't want to use Geese and Swans to get Tier 1 priority, what is minimum area needed?

The 50% of mapped area or 19 ha is the minimum requirement for the action to be eligible. It is not just a requirement for Tier 1 access. If they don't meet the 50% or 19ha then the action will be deemed ineligible This has not changed.

### Linear Based Actions

### 37. Planting a new hedge along a riverbank, is there a minimum distance from the bank?

No but 2-3m back from the water's edge is recommended.

### 38. Can an existing stone wall along a watercourse be used a boundary for a riparian buffer strip grassland?

If selecting a Riparian Buffer Strip grassland along that watercourse with a stone wall, the Riparian Buffer Strip width will be measured from the edge of the existing boundary i.e., the stone wall in this case) into the field. A Permanent suitable fence would also be required.

### 39. Can I have a riparian zone and a riparian strip in the same LPIS and get paid for both?

The Riparian Buffer Zone can be selected as a Split parcel action. A Riparian Buffer strip can be selected along a watercourse in the remaining split parcel. Both split parcels will get their own LPIS when digitised for BISS 2023.

### 40. A client wishes to plant hedges on a pNHA. This pNHA is now removed and client has a letter stating this. How do I submit application?

The adviser can only prepare the plan based on the mapped layers that are on GLAM.

### 41. Can an applicant coppice or lay a hedge on a boundary hedge if they get written permission from the adjoining landowner (similar to planting a new hedge)?

No, not allowed in any scenario.



42. The action environmental management of arable fallow to get Tier 2 access in a VWA are parcels in the VWA zones which have a winter crop at present not eligible as would not be able to create bare ground by shallow cultivation before the 31st of March next year. If action can not be delivered it should not be chosen. There are other actions that can be chosen in the VWA that will allow an applicant to be considered for Tier 2.
43. Is it permissible to have an arable grass margin at the edge of a bird cover parcel?  
These cannot be selected on the parcel. You may split a parcel and select WBF split parcel and select linear action in the remaining split parcel, however you must comply with ACRES Requirements page 19 Note: **Any LPIS parcel(s) that is split for area actions will receive a new LPIS number once digitised in the 2023 BISS application. Several split parcel actions can be selected on each existing LPIS, and other actions can be selected in the remaining area. Note: When splitting parcels, do not create a parcel that is less than 20 metres wide. Parcels less than 20 metres wide will not be digitised and consequently will not be deemed eligible as split parcels (all actions on the parcel may also be deemed ineligible). Participants should note that where a fence is erected to delineate the boundary of a split parcel, this fence cannot be used as part of the fencing requirements for the follow actions: Coppicing of hedgerows; Grass margins – Grassland; Laying of hedgerows; Planting a new hedgerow; Planting a traditional orchard; Riparian buffer strip– Grassland; and Tree planting.**
44. Where farmer plant trees or hedges now (accepting the risk, they may or may not be accepted into ACRES AND / OR their proposed tree and hedge planting actions may or may not be approved) – IF they are accepted into ACRES and tree and hedge planting actions are approved – Will these trees and hedges planted now qualify for actions undertaken on their ACRES?  
No, only works carried out after contract commences will be eligible for payment. Refer to Terms and Conditions
45. Is **fencing of Tillage Actions** required where there are no livestock? Answer to No 26 from 24 Oct only confirms what the Spec says about the fencing of watercourses from bovines and there appears to be different requirements for Overwinter Stubble and Environmental Management of Fallow in the Spec?  
The requirements for each action are set out in the Revised ACRES specifications that are on the GOV.IE website. Certain tillage actions only need to be fenced if livestock are present in the adjoining field.
46. What's the penalty if a farmer undertakes an action (e.g., coppicing) which requires a fence that was fenced last year with a new TAMS sheep fence? If the TAMS fence has been used to fulfil any of the fencing requirement for the coppicing the action will be deemed ineligible as there is a double funding issue.  
Would it be ok if a second new fence was erected on the other side of the hedge?



If the newly coppiced hedge required fencing at both sides to protect from livestock and a TAMS granted fence was used to fulfil the requirement on one side, it would not be acceptable, the length of hedgerow would be deemed ineligible for payment.

47. Where a watercourse was piped (years ago) but on GLAMS it is shown as Water single streamline. If an area-based action that requires Single streamlines to be fenced is undertaken on this parcel – please confirm there will not need to fence the piped watercourse as there is nothing visible on the ground.

Bovines are not permitted to access the watercourse. If it is piped and no access it will not have to be fenced at that location.

48. The actions that can be rotated on a farm, e.g., catch crops. Does it matter if the initial land these actions are entered on is lost during the contract, provided they are claimed each year on BISS?

Yes, it is fine if they are claimed on BISS each year as they can rotate around the farm.

### **Co-operative Approach**

49. What is the max annual Acres payment for a CP farmer that has only private CP lands (150 ha private CP) and is also in Organics?

Maximum payment for all ACRES CP applicant's is €52,500 over the 5-year contract, this included OFS applicants. The maximum Core payment any ACRES CP participant can get each year is €7,000. The Core payment is the CP results-based payment plus any payment for General Actions that are eligible after applying the ring-fencing calculation. There is €3,500 available for NPIs and LAs. If the Core payment is less than €7,000, the shortfall can be available for additional NPIs or LAs. For parcels in receipt of OFS payments, ACRES CP results-based payments are reduced by €250/ha (refer to Appendix 6 of the ACRES specification)

50. Is a farmer that meets €7,000 ring fencing at application stage but after scoring gets to a max payment of €6,000. It's my understanding that the balancing €1,000 can be selected from the list of NPI's. As the farmer didn't meet the full €7000 cap does this render them ineligible for the further €3,500 that can be obtained in CP areas?

The full €52,500 will be available to all participants over the 5-year contract period so the €1,000 is added to the €3,500 allowance for NPIs/LAs.