

## Appendix 2: Significance Criteria

### 1. Introduction

1.1 The ES Review identified a need:

- for consistency in describing the sensitivity, magnitude and nature of the effects; and
- to identify the threshold for determining EIA significance.

1.2 In terms of consistency, the EIA has specifically avoided the imposition of uniform terminology across the topics, provided that the derivation of significant effects is clearly explained and reported (as required under the Regulations). This is because of fundamental differences between the topics in terms of their methodology, their policy requirements and their relative reliance on professional judgement or numerical indices.

1.3 As a result, any attempt at equivalence in the reporting of levels of significance between topics could be misleading. Instead, the approach adopted allows each technical consultant the scope to define and categorize the effects in a way that is most appropriate for their topic.

1.4 The basis on which levels of significance have been derived is explained within each technical chapter of the ES. The following sections summarize how “EIA significance” has been defined for each topic.

### 2. Cultural Heritage

2.1 The criteria used to assess the sensitivity of each receptor are based primarily on existing designations and scale of importance as set out below but allows for professional judgement where features do not have any formal designation. **Table 1** below contains the criteria used to assess the importance of heritage assets within the study area.

**Table 1: Importance Criteria for Cultural Heritage Assets**

Scale of importance	Heritage Asset
International	Archaeological sites of international importance including world heritage sites. Other buildings or structures of recognised international importance
National	Scheduled ancient monuments; listed buildings and Archaeological sites of schedulable quality and importance
Regional	Conservation areas, undesignated archaeological sites of regional importance
Local	Sites or buildings with specific and substantial importance to local interest groups, sites or buildings whose importance is limited by poor preservation and poor survival of contextual associations.
Not important	Sites with no surviving archaeological or heritage component

2.2 **Table 2** below sets out the criteria used to assess the sensitivity of built heritage receptors.

**Table 2: Sensitivity Criteria for Cultural Heritage Receptors**

Receptor sensitivity	Description
High	World heritage sites, scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings Undesignated assets of schedulable quality and importance, assets that contribute significantly to acknowledged national research objectives
Medium	Conservation areas, undesignated heritage assets that contribute to regional research objectives
Low	Undesignated heritage assets of local importance, assets compromised by poor preservation and poor survival of contextual associations, assets of limited significance
Negligible	Assets with very little or no surviving archaeological significance
Unknown	The importance of the recourse has not been ascertained

2.3 As set out above, effects on the historic environment include direct effects (e.g. the loss of structures or fabric) and indirect or general effects on the character and appearance of heritage assets (e.g. change in setting) The criteria used to assess the magnitude of likely effects are set out in **Table 3** below.

**Table 3: Magnitude of Cultural Heritage Effects**

Magnitude	Direct Effects	Indirect effects
Major adverse	Complete removal of an archaeological site or historic building	Radical transformation of the setting of an archaeological site, monument or historic building which leads to substantial harm to the significance of the monument or building
Moderate adverse	Removal of a major part of an archaeological site and loss of research potential Alterations without record to a historic building.	Partial transformation of the setting of an archaeological site, scheduled monument or historic building, i.e. changes to amenity use, accessibility or appreciation of an archaeological site or historic building
Minor adverse	Minor impact to an archaeological site or historic building	Minor harm to the setting of an archaeological monument or historic building.
Negligible/neutral	No effect from changes in use, amenity and access	No perceptible change in the setting of an archaeological site or historic building.
Minor beneficial	Land use change resulting in improved conditions for the protection of archaeological remains or a historic building	Decrease in visual or noise intrusion on the setting of an archaeological site, monument or historic building.
Moderate beneficial	Land use change resulting in improved conditions for the protection of archaeological remains, plus interpretation features, improvements to immediate setting.	Significant reduction or removal of visual or noise intrusion on the setting of an archaeological site, monument or historic building. Improvement of wide landscape setting, improvement of cultural heritage amenity, access or use of an archaeological site, monument or historic building.
Major beneficial	Arrest of physical damage or decay	Significant enhancement to the setting of an archaeological site, monument or historic building, or enhancement to its cultural amenity,

		access, and / or use.
--	--	-----------------------

- 2.4 The sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of direct and indirect effects have been used to determine the significance of effects. The magnitude ranges from major adverse or beneficial through to negligible. Major adverse effects represent significant harmful effects on the receptor's special interest; for example, through complete destruction. Moderate to minor adverse effects represent varying degrees of harm affecting the special interest of the assets.
- 2.5 The criteria for assessment of the significance are set out in **Table 4** below with any major or moderate adverse effects considered to cause a degree of sensitivity at an international, national, regional and local level.

**Table 4: Significance Criteria for Cultural Heritage Effects**

Magnitude of effect	Sensitivity			
	International national (high sensitivity)	Regional (medium sensitivity)	Local (Low sensitivity)	Negligible
Major	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Moderate	Moderate	Minor/moderate	Minor	Negligible
Minor	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
None (negligible)	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

### 3. Ecology

- 3.1 The significance criteria are fully described in the chapter and supporting appendices. Effects of "minor adverse" magnitude and above were deemed to be significant for EIA purposes.

### 4. Flood Risk and Drainage

- 4.1 As explained in ES Main Report Chapter 8, the significance of the effects for EIA purposes has been derived by relating the sensitivity of the receiving environment to the degree of change represented by the development. These factors have been categorised in accordance with a high/medium/low scale to give rise to major, substantial, moderate, minor or negligible effects on the basis of the matrix presented in **Table 5** below. Effects of moderate significance or above are regarded as significant for EIA purposes.

**Table 5: Significance Matrix for Flood Risk and Drainage Effects**

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change			
	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Major	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
Moderate	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Minor	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

### 5. Geo-Environment

- 5.1 Within ES Main Report Chapter 9, the descriptions of the environmental effects and their significance have been outlined within Table 9.1. The table sets out the effect

and its severity. In the context of the ES Chapter, the severity of effects is the same as the significance, i.e. the severity has been used as a measure of significance.

## **6. Landscape and Views**

6.1 Effects of “moderate” magnitude or above are considered to be significant for EIA purposes. This is why only Moderate/Major effects have been included in the summary of effects tables (i.e. we are only assessing effects that are considered to be potentially significant anyway). The matrices within the chapter offer a higher or lower end to each threshold (Minor, Moderate and Major) from which an overall conclusion is derived.

6.2 Whilst a single moderate effect might not be regarded as significant (in our resume of EIA terms) in the balance, an accumulation of a number of moderate effects (depending on their nature) may be. The identification of significant effects has been based on professional judgement, combined with the guidance and interpretation of the GLVIA methodology. All other effects have been scoped out.

## **7. Socio-Economics**

7.1 There are no universally agreed criteria for reporting the significance of socio-economic effects, and it is for each assessment to adopt an approach that is meaningful in each case. In this case, effects greater than “negligible” are considered to be significant for EIA purposes, using the following geographical scale:

- Minor: Significant at the ward level;
- Moderate: Significant at the urban (i.e. Folkestone/Hythe level); and
- Major: Significant at the district-wide level.

## **8. Transport**

8.1 The significance criteria applied are described in paragraphs 12.11 to 12.15 of ES Main Report Chapter 12, including the threshold levels that have been used to assess the scale of transport impacts. A commentary about the predicted scale of transport impacts is provided in paragraphs 12.59 to 12.69.

■