THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

The Droves Solar Farm

Design Approach Document (Part 2)

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Reptiles:

4.4.11 The majority of the internal field areas are largely unsuitable for reptiles due to intensive arable production. The field boundary vegetation, including grassland margins, hedgerow bases and ponds provide potentially suitable habitats for reptiles, albeit no background records for reptiles from the last 20 years were returned from NBIS. Very low numbers of common reptile species (Grass Snake and Common Lizard) were recorded; and

Amphibians (Great Crested Newt):

4.4.12 A number of ponds are present within the Site and surrounding areas, including apparently suitable breeding opportunities for Great Crested Newt. Specific eDNA survey work was undertaken of all suitable/accessible ponds within 250m of the Site, which recorded negative results (indicating GCN likely to be absent). Further eDNA surveys of accessible ponds located between 250m and 500m of the Site recorded the presence of Great Crested newt within three of the ponds within this distance.

4.4.13 Further details on the biodiversity baseline and these surveys are provided in **ES Appendix 7.2: Baseline Ecological Survey Report [APP/6.4]**. Discussion of the baseline and details on the impact assessment and mitigation is in **ES Chapter 7: Ecology and Biodiversity [APP/6.2]**.

Red Kite

Grass Snake

4.5 Cultural Heritage

4.5.1 The Site has been subject to baseline surveys which include historic environment record searches, geophysical survey, walkover survey, assessment of airborne remote sensing and satellite imagery data and archaeological desk-based assessment.

4.5.2 The Cultural Heritage Study Area extended to 5km from the Site for higher grade heritage assets (i.e. World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings); 2km for remaining designated heritage assets (i.e. Grade II listed buildings and Conservation Areas); and 1km for non-designated heritage assets and Historic Environment Record (HER) entries.

WWII Bombing Decoy overgrown with vegetation

Designated Heritage Assets

4.5.3 Within the respective Study Areas surrounding the Site, there are 151 designated heritage assets, comprising three Scheduled Monuments, nineteen Grade I listed buildings, seven Grade II* listed buildings, one hundred and eight Grade II listed buildings, one Grade II Registered Park and Garden, and three Conservation Areas.

4.5.4 A combination of viewshed analysis and walkover surveys have confirmed that only 15 designated heritage assets share (or potentially share) intervisibility with the Site and require consideration within the Cultural Heritage and Archaeology assessment, as these could be potentially affected by the Scheme. The majority of these are shown in Figure 1.9 and summarised below:

- **Castle Acre Castle:** Scheduled Monument with Grade I Listed elements located c.800m to the north-east of the Site
- **Castle Acre Priory:** Scheduled Monument with Grade I Listed elements located c.475 north of the Site
- **Moated Sites north of All Saints Church:** Scheduled Monuments 230m and 110m north of All Saints Church, approximately 2km north of the Site
- **Deserted Medieval Village of Great Palgrave:** Scheduled Monument 750m east of the Site
- **Church of St George:** Grade I Listed Building located 170m north of the Site

- **Church of St James:** Grade I Listed Building located 940m north-east of the Site
- **Church of All Saints:** Grade I Listed Building located 2km north-east of the Site
- **High House and High House Stable Court and Curtain Wall:** Grade I listed buildings approximately 5km north of the Site
- **Little Palgrave Hall:** Grade II listed building located c.1.35km east of the Site
- **Narford Hall:** Grade II Registered Park and Garden c.400m west of the Site
- **Castle Acre Conservation Area:** c.450m north-east of the Site; and
- **South Acre Conservation Area:** immediately north of the Site.

Church of St George

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

4.5.5 Non-designated heritage assets can only be identified by planning bodies when they justifiably have a degree of heritage significance and their status as non-designated heritage assets is made clear through their inclusion in local heritage lists, local & neighbourhood plans, Conservation Area appraisals and decision making on planning applications.

4.5.6 Consultation undertaken on the Scheme, including the Scoping Opinion and PEIR responses, has clarified that both Historic England and the BCKLWN consider that the inclusion of a monument within the Norfolk Historic Environment Record is generally sufficient to classify it as a non-designated heritage asset. However, not all HER records are non-designated heritage assets; rather, they are often an indication of archaeological potential. For the purposes of the Scheme, archaeological remains (both those identified by the HER and those identified by archaeological fieldwork undertaken to inform the study) are considered as potential non-designated heritage assets. These are summarised as follows:

Historic landscape:

4.5.7 The Site largely comprises fields with irregular or piecemeal 18th to 19th century enclosures as classified by the historic landscape characterisation (HLC). The remaining Fields 22, 23, 26, 27 and 29 are characterised by the HLC as 20th century agriculture; whilst Fields 14 and 18 are classified as post-20th century boundary loss

Buildings:

4.5.8 The only building within the Site which is potentially considered a non-designated heritage asset is a concrete bunker that is associated with a World War II bombing decoy. There are no non-designated built heritage assets beyond the Site that are identified by BC that could be considered sensitive to the Scheme; and

Archaeological and Historical Context of the Site:

4.5.9 The Norfolk Historic Environment Record (HER) contains 145 records within a 1km search area, consisting of 136 'monuments' and nine 'events'. Those within the Site are as follows:

4.5.10 Limited prehistoric activity has been recorded within the Site, most notably relating to three concentrations of 'pot-boilers' thought to represent burnt mounds situated in a cluster towards its centre. These monuments are generally artefact poor, but radiocarbon dating indicates that they were formed in the Neolithic to Iron Age periods, with the majority dating to the Bronze Age

4.5.11 There are several HER entries relating to prehistoric findspots primarily recovered during metal-detecting and fieldwalking within and in the immediate environs of the Site, including pottery, lithics and metal items dating from the Neolithic to the Iron Age; and

4.5.12 The projected route of the Fen Causeway, a potentially Roman road thought to have prehistoric origins (although this has recently been called into question), is recorded by the HER as extending into the western part of the Site, followed by the current route of Fincham Drove.

Geophysical Survey Results

4.5.13 A geophysical survey (magnetometry) of the Site was undertaken in Autumn 2024. The only anomalies correlating with the locations of potential burnt mounds within the Site were identified by the geophysical survey were identified within the southern part of Field 23. Several other anomalies are present that may be representative of other Prehistoric activity. A double ring-ditched feature positioned within a square enclosure was identified in Field 15, which could be morphologically consistent with a Bronze Age date, although further evidence would be required to confirm this. A large polygonal enclosure identified to the north of Fincham Drove within Field 9 is also of likely prehistoric date and potentially dates to the Bronze Age or Iron Age. There were also several anomalies identified in Fields 8, 9, 10, 15, 18, 23, 27 and 32 that could potentially relate to Iron Age and/or Roman activity representing settlement and stock enclosures.

4.5.14 Further details of the cultural heritage baseline are provided in **ES Chapter 8: Heritage [APP/6.2]** and **ES Appendices 8.3 – 8.5 [APP/6.4]**.

Figure 1.9: Heritage Assets

4.6 Agricultural Land & Soils

4.6.1 The predominant land use within the Site is intensively managed arable fields, with areas under rotation for pig and poultry grazing. Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) surveys have been undertaken for the Site, the results of which are summarised below.

ALC Survey

4.6.2 ALC is the standard method for classifying agricultural land in England and Wales based on the type and level of agricultural production it can potentially support. The best quality agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) is known as Best and Most Versatile (BMV) and is given a greater level of protection in planning policy than lower quality, non-BMV land (Grades 3b, 4 and 5).

4.6.3 An ALC survey is shown in Figure 1.10 and identifies a large range in the ALC types found across the Site, from two modest areas of Grade 1 to areas of Grade 4. The results show that, in broad terms, the eastern and western areas of the Site are generally moderate or poor quality land, and the central areas, where the soils are more loamy and hold more water, are generally good or very good quality.

4.6.4 The ALC survey, shown on Figure 1.10, identified that approximately 58% of the site surveyed (774 hectares) is classified as BMV quality land, primarily consisting of Grades 1 (27 hectares), 2 (279 hectares) and 3a (149 hectares), with the remaining 38% of the Site (Grade 3b (269 hectares) and Grade 4 (20 hectares)) considered non-BMV quality land (not including non-agricultural (30 hectares), 4% of the site surveyed). More information can be found in **ES Appendix 11.2: Agricultural Land Classification Survey [APP/6.4].**

Soils and Soil Type

4.6.5 Soils have been mapped historically by the Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW) at a 1:250,000 scale. The SSEW mapping for the Site identifies that the soils are expected to comprise mostly soils of the 554b Worlington Association, being deep, well-drained sandy soils, in places very acid with a subsurface pan, and at risk of wind erosion. In the west of the Site, soils are shown as 343f Newmarket 1, being shallow well-drained calcareous sandy over coarse loamy soils over chalk or chalk rubble.

4.6.6 Soils have been found to be more variable than indicated on the national soil map and in some fields can vary over short distances, giving rise to several ALC grades within the same field.

4.6.7 Loamier soils are generally found in the central part of the Site (Grade 2). As soils become sandier they hold less moisture for plant use and are graded lower quality as a result (Subgrade 3a). Soils of Subgrade 3b are generally sandy or shallow (including over limestone). Outdoor pig rearing is taking place on the land of Grade 4 at present.

Farming Circumstances

4.6.8 The Site is farmed by a number of different businesses, partly in-hand (i.e. farmed by the owners) and partly on various tenancy arrangements. The majority of the land is used for arable cropping. This includes combinable crops such as wheat, barley, oilseed rape and arable break crops, as well as rye and vining peas. Part of the Site is let most years to different specialist growers who grow root crops (potatoes, carrots, parsnips) or onions. Parts of the Site are used for agri-environmental farming uses. The western side of the Site is farmed in-hand. When vegetables are grown, they are grown on a license arrangement. Within the Site, there are four areas of outdoor livestock production, which are tenanted to the livestock farmers.

4.6.9 Further details of the soils and agriculture baseline are provided in **ES Chapter 11: Soils and Agriculture [APP/6.2].**

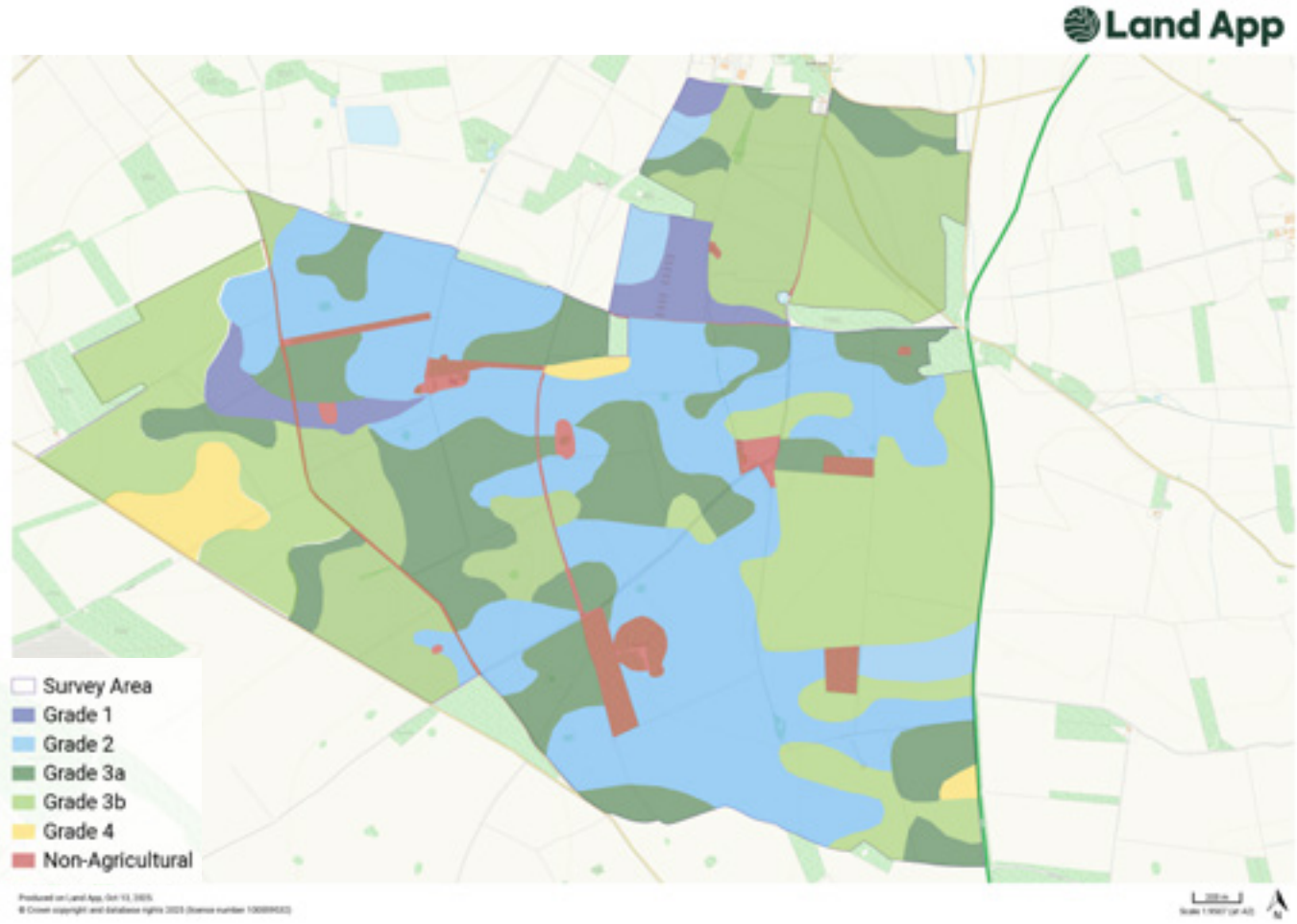


Figure 1.10: Map of Agricultural Land Classification Grade

4.7 Water Resources

Hydrogeological Context

4.7.1 The Site is situated on chalk bedrock, which acts as a major underground water source. This chalk is highly permeable, where water moves easily through cracks and gaps, making it an important aquifer for the region.

4.7.2 The area is classified as having high to medium-high groundwater vulnerability, indicating that the water beneath the Site is sensitive to pollution. The majority of the Site lies within Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 2, with the western parts of the Site located in SPZ 1. These areas are designated to protect nearby drinking water supplies, particularly those used by Anglian Water at Marham, located around 5.8 km to the west.

4.7.3 A small part of the Site also falls within a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone, reinforcing the importance of managing potential pollution risks.

4.7.4 The Site is within the Norfolk Bradenham Water Resource Zone, which relies on groundwater from the chalk aquifer. This region is recognised as “seriously water stressed”, meaning water resources are under significant pressure.

4.7.5 Environmental assessments, as noted by The Norfolk Rivers Trust, have identified elevated nitrate levels in the groundwater, mainly due to diffuse agricultural pollution. These levels exceed safe drinking water standards and are a key reason why the groundwater in the area is not currently meeting environmental quality targets.

4.7.6 These designations reflect the importance of managing land use in a way that protects local drinking water resources and highlights the need to avoid activities that could pose a risk to water quality.

Flood Zones and Surface Water

4.7.7 There are no natural watercourses within the Site. Agricultural ditches onsite have presented as persistently dry. Several marl pits (clay removed for agricultural fertiliser) exist throughout the Site, some of which are filled with standing water.

4.7.8 The Environment Agency’s (EA) Flood Map for Planning, provided at Figure 1.11, shows the Solar PV Site entirely within Flood Zone 1, having a very low risk of flooding.

4.7.9 The EA Surface Water Flood Map shows that the risk of surface water flooding across the Site is generally low. The only areas with potential flooding during a major rainfall event (with a 1% chance of occurring in any given year) are localised, confined to a small topographical depression in the northern part of the Site (Fields 29 and 30); and an area near Fincham Drove.

4.7.10 Further details of the water resources baseline are provided in **ES Chapter 12: Water Resources [APP/6.2]**.

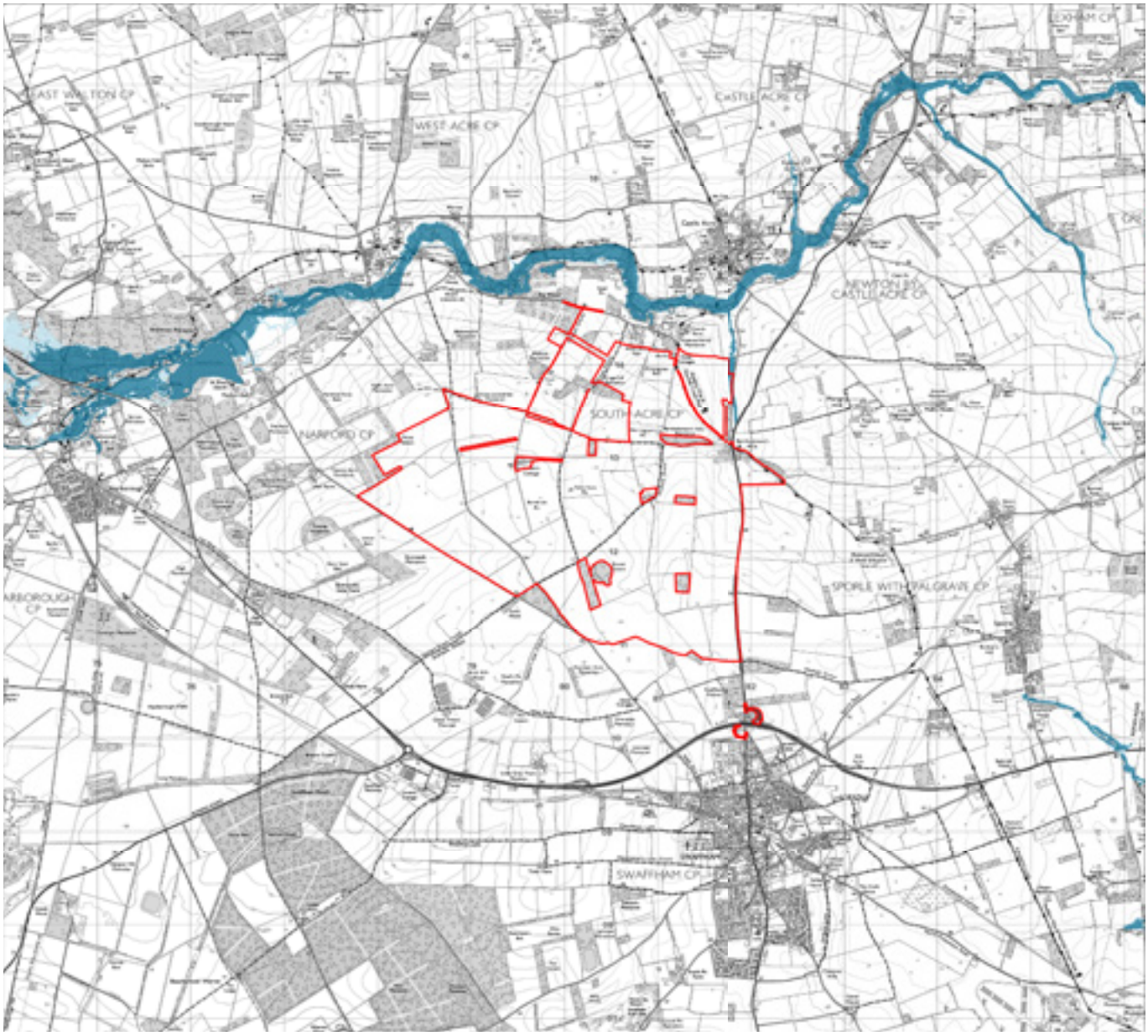


Figure 1.11: Environment Agency's (EA) Flood Map for Planning

4.8 Access and Recreation

Highway Network

4.8.1 Approximately 2km to the south of the Site, the A47 forms part of the strategic road network (SRN) and provides strategic connections to Norwich, approximately 48km to the east and King's Lynn, approximately 40km to the west, both of which have operational ports.

4.8.2 Along the Site's eastern boundary is the A1065, a single carriageway road that runs in a north-south alignment connecting Swaffham to Fakenham and serves as an important link for local and regional traffic movements. It has varying speed limits, with 30mph sections through built-up areas and a national speed limit (60mph) in rural stretches. Where the A1065 runs adjacent to the Site's eastern boundary, it is subject to a 60mph speed limit.

4.8.3 West Acre Road is a single carriageway road running from Swaffham in a north westerly direction before becoming Narford Lane. It forms a priority junction with Lynn Road in the south. It has a varying speed limit, with 30mph restrictions towards the southern end, transitioning to the national speed limit (60mph) as it progresses northward through the Site boundary up to Narford Road further north.

4.8.4 Narford Road is a single carriageway road subject to the national speed limit (60mph). It forms a priority junction with the A47 to the west of the Site and connects north to Low Road and subsequently River Road, before joining back onto the A1065 in the east via South Acre Road.

4.8.5 Due to the rural nature of the road within the vicinity of the Site, there is limited provision of footways alongside the carriageways of the roads. There is no footway along the A1065 where it passes along the Site's eastern boundary.

Cycle Network

4.8.6 There are no designated sections of the National Cycle Network within the Study Area, although there is a promoted cycle route, The Rebellion Way, a 232-mile cycling adventure around Norfolk, that uses quiet back roads, byways (including those within the Site), cycle paths and bridleways; and the King's Lynn Cycle Route that passes along Narford Lane to the south of the Site.

Public Rights of Way Network & Recreational Routes

4.8.7 There is an extensive Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network within the Site that links to surrounding settlements, as shown on Figure 1.12. The PRoW that pass through the Site are all dedicated as Restricted Byways, for use by carriage drivers (i.e. horse and cart), horses, cyclists and on foot. Several of these PRoW coincide with promoted routes, notably:

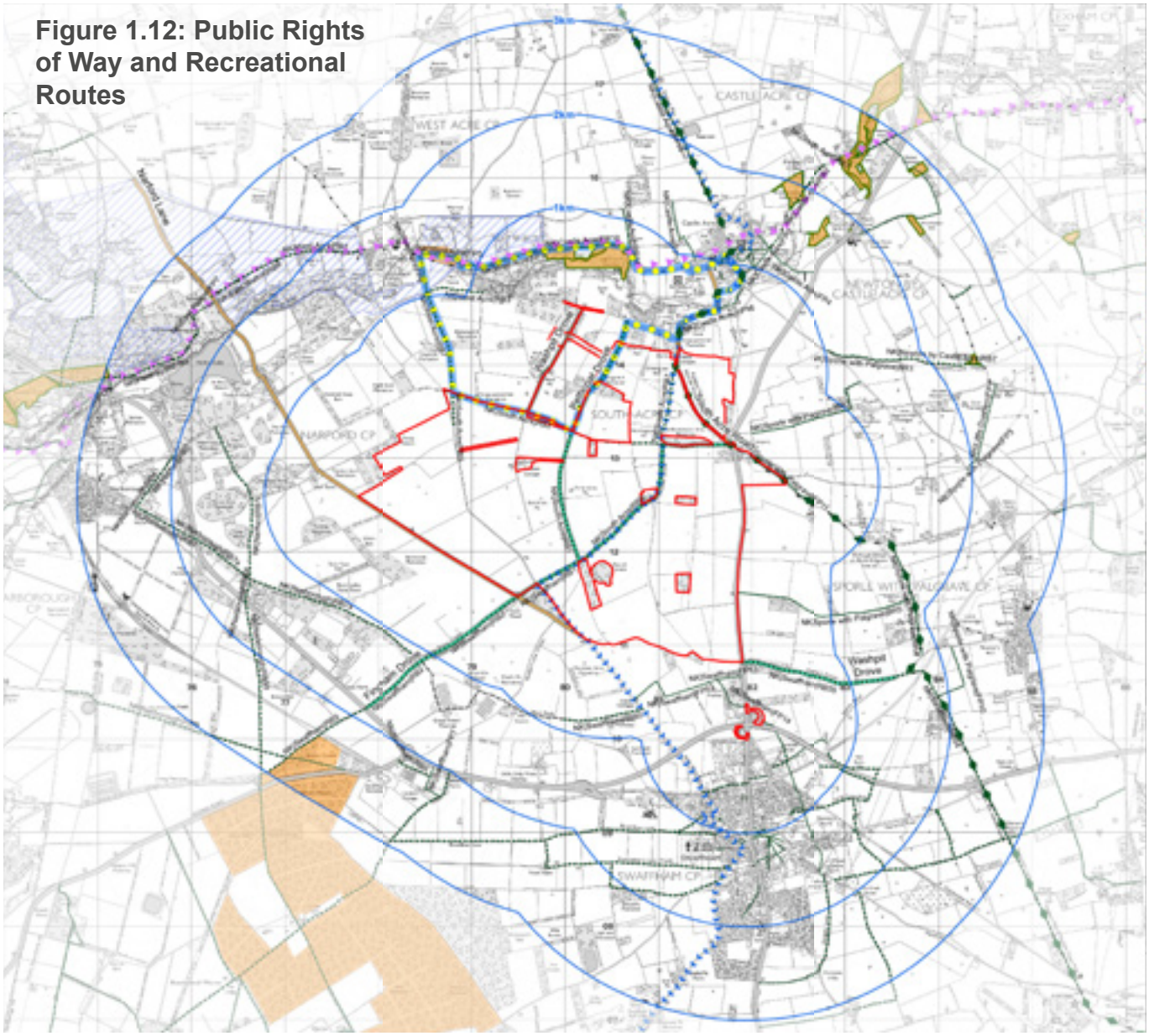
- Castle Acre Circular Walk, which passes east-west through the site along South Acre RB2, and is part of loop that includes Castle Acre, the Nar Valley and the Peddars Way National Trail; and
- The Rebellion way, as noted above, where it passes along South Acre RB6 (Fincham Drove) and South Acre RB7.

4.8.8 Two Long Distance Recreation Routes pass close to the Site, linking up with the Rights of Way Network. They are:

- The Peddars Way and Norfolk Coastal Path, a 46-mile route from Knettishall Heath, Suffolk to Holme-Next-The-Sea, Norfolk, classed as a National Trail, and passes immediately adjacent to the site's north-eastern boundary; and
- The Nar Valley Way, which passes approximately 800m north of the Site.

4.8.9 Whilst the distribution of PRoW is extensive within the Site and wider area, there is a notable absence of PRoW within the south-eastern parts of the Site, connecting to Swaffham.

Figure 1.12: Public Rights of Way and Recreational Routes



Other recreational resources

4.8.10 In addition to cycle and walking routes passing through and near the Site, there are other recreational resources in the Site's vicinity, including areas of open access land, nature areas, and formal and informal recreation areas. These are predominantly located within the Nar Valley and contribute to the recreational value of the river corridor.

4.8.11 Further details of the access and recreation baseline are provided in **ES Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual, and ES Chapter 9: Traffic and Transport [APP/6.2].**

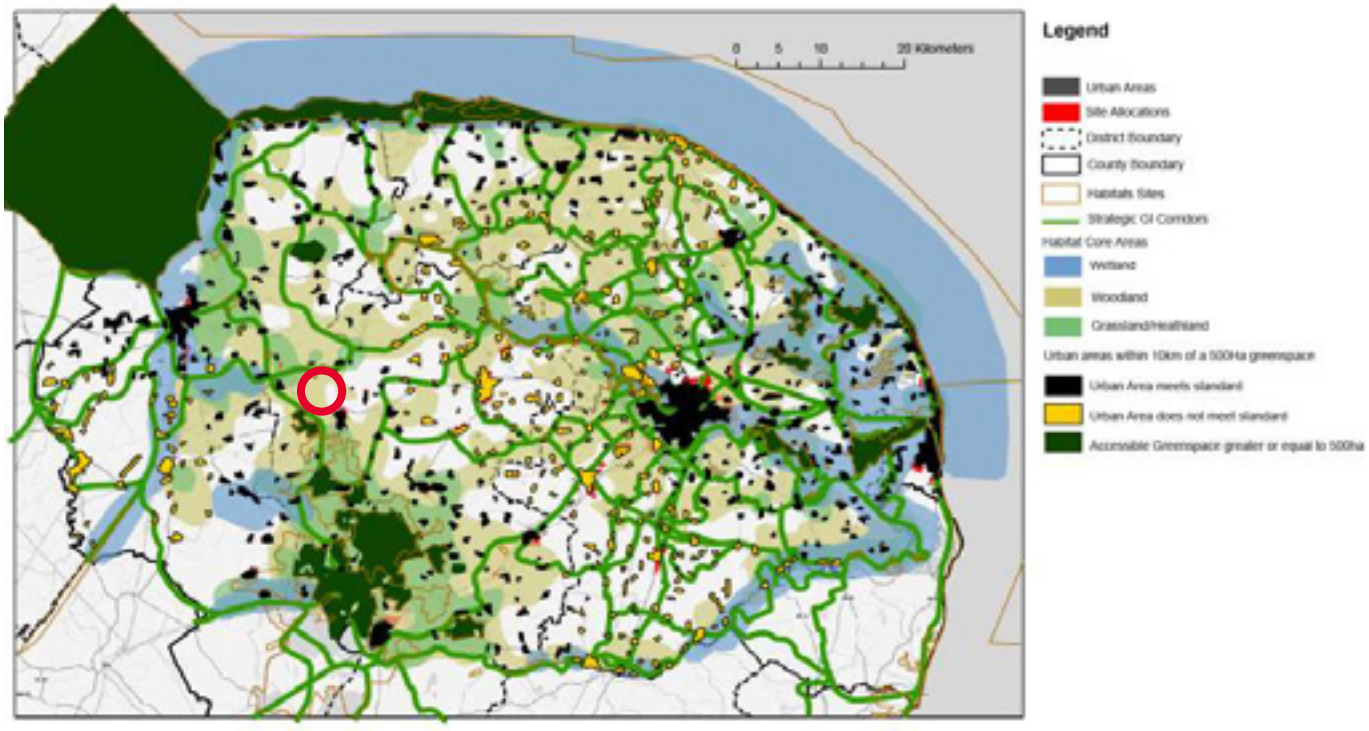
4.9 Green Infrastructure & Nature Recovery

Green Infrastructure Strategies

4.9.1 "Green infrastructure is the network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Recognising the value of all green space, not just protected landscapes, green infrastructure is a term used to cover all types of green space, large or small, public or private; including water bodies such as river corridors" (Breckland Local Plan 2023).

4.9.2 Green Infrastructure (GI)is a key thread that runs through BC's adopted local plan, with continued emphasis placed on its importance within the emerging local plan. As a predominantly rural council, Breckland has a vast green infrastructure network, stretching from protected European sites, through to hedgerows and trees across farmland, to back gardens and local parks.

4.9.3 BC has worked collectively with other Local Planning Authorities in Norfolk, seeking improved connectivity across the county and beyond. In 2018, work was undertaken to identify strategic green infrastructure corridors and habitat core areas, recorded on the Norfolk Green Infrastructure Map (GIMP) **[Ref 11]**, as shown on Figure 1.13.



Source: Place Services, 2020

Figure 1.13: Norfolk Green Infrastructure Map – Strategic GI corridors and habitat core areas overlay

4.9.4 The Site is located between two strategic green infrastructure corridors – one to the north associated with the River Nar and one to the west associated with the Narbororough dismantled railway. These pass through or connect with core habitat areas along the valley corridor to the north and Swaffham Heath (and Breckland SPA) to the south. These corridors and areas are mapped on BC's Green Infrastructure Policies Map, as shown on Figure 1.14.

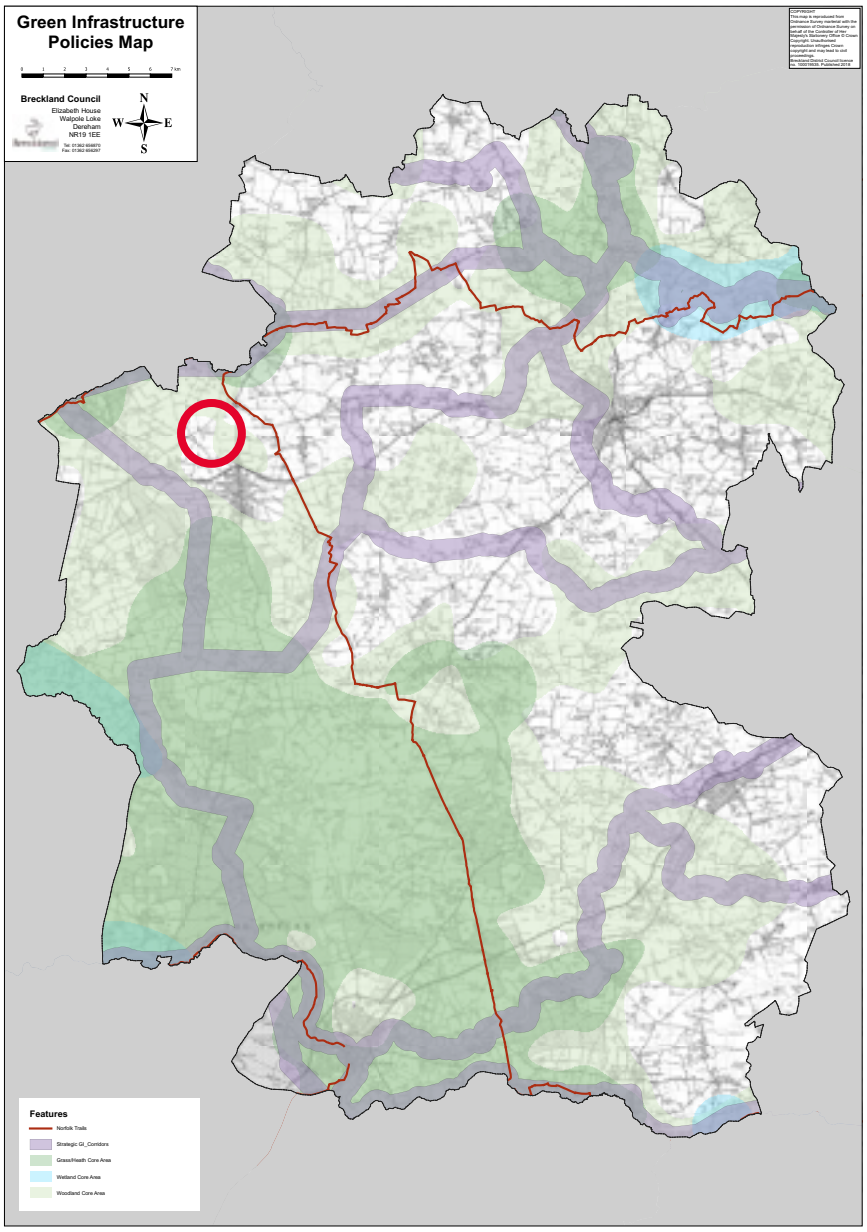


Figure 1.14: Breckland Council Green Infrastructure Policies Map

4.9.5 Building on the mapping project, the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS, 2021) **[Ref 12]** was commissioned with the aim of mitigating the effects of increased recreational pressure on protected Habitats Sites due to housing growth, whilst meeting the GI & nature needs of residents and visitors to Norfolk. GI provision is noted as being "essential to divert and deflect visitors away from the sensitive Habitats Sites and their rare species to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of these sites". The impact of Covid 19 during the production of the strategy highlighted the importance of designing for active travel and access to green space, as well as designing to improve wildlife corridors and connectivity. As such, it was decided it was vital to actively encourage people to walk or ride a bicycle and enjoy local green infrastructure opportunities to support a sense of wellbeing.

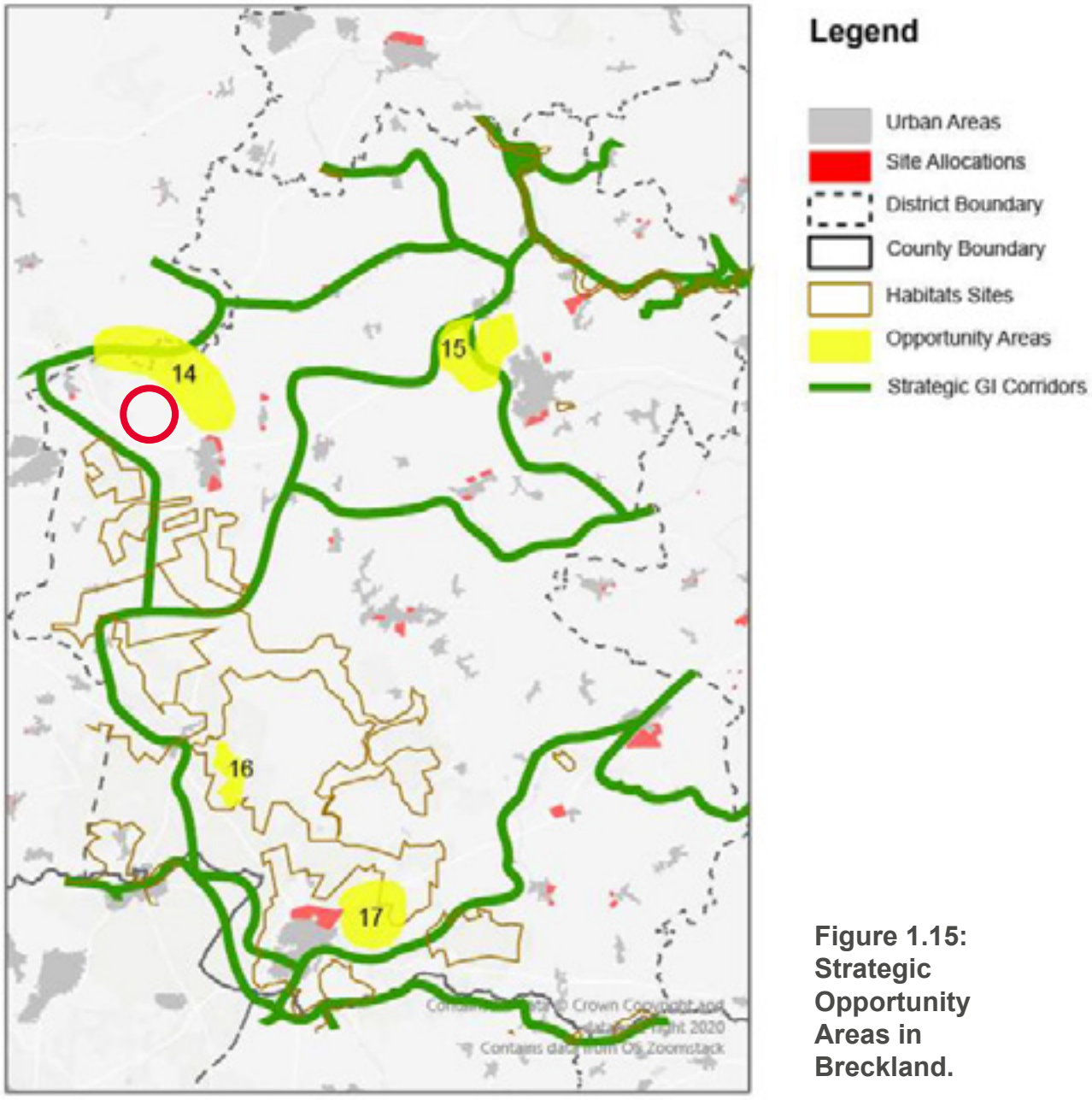


Figure 1.15: Strategic Opportunity Areas in Breckland.

Source: Place Services, 2020

4.9.6 Within the strategy, opportunity areas for improving the GI Network at the strategic level were explored. In Breckland, four Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOAs) were proposed to enhance the GI network.

4.9.7 SOA 14, shown on Figure 1.15, is located between Swaffham and the Nar Valley, passing through the eastern and northern parts of the Site. The strategy notes that alongside the restoration project sponsored by the Norfolk Rivers Trust via the Catchment Restoration Fund to 're-wild' the river, there are "opportunities to implement enhanced suitability GI to improve connectivity, provide circular routes for cycling and walking and countryside activities, along with: inclusive and accessible-meet disability needs and provide for varied groups; wayfinding in the form of signposts and advertisements; and improvements to wetland areas". With growth predicted at Swaffham and its proximity to the Breckland SPA, the Site has the potential to contribute to the delivery of improved recreational connectivity between Swaffham and the Nar valley, and enhanced ecological connectivity by acting as a stepping-stone habitat between key green infrastructure corridors. In addition, there are opportunities for wayfinding and educational material at existing locations and routes within the site, to enhance the experience of passing through the landscape to the Nar valley.

Westacre Estate Rewilding Project

4.9.8 To the north of the Site, the Westacre Estate has allocated 1,970 acres of farmland to rewilding to kick-start nature recovery and create an enhanced experience for visitors. The rewilding area includes wet woodland that has become naturally established, and a range of soil types, from wet peat to chalk, resulting in a mosaic of habitats.

4.9.9 Whilst the Scheme would not increase areas of rewilded farmland, it can serve to improve ecological connections between the Nar valley and new and improved on-site habitats. The hope is that during its lifetime, the Scheme would demonstrate local landowner commitment to tackling climate change and contributing to nature recovery.

Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy

4.9.10 The draft Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was published by NCC **[Ref 13]** for public consultation between April and June 2025, with final publication to DEFRA anticipated in Autumn 2025.

4.9.11 The aim of LNRS is to provide information in relation to opportunities and priorities for nature recovery and restoration across the associated LNRS area, including the production of a local habitat map showing the location of key habitats for nature recovery actions and a written statement of biodiversity priorities for the area.

4.9.12 The draft LNRS outlines nature recovery principles based on the Lawton Principles, introduced in the 2010 report Making Space for Nature. These focus on making space for wildlife and ensuring habitats are better connected, more robust, and able to support biodiversity in the long term. These "more, bigger, better, and joined" principles are summed up as:

- **more** means increasing the amount of natural habitat, so there's more space for plants and animals to thrive
- **bigger** refers to making habitats larger. Larger areas are more resilient and support more species over time
- **better** focuses on improving the quality of habitats. This ensures they are healthy and able to support a wide range of wildlife; and
- **joined** is about linking habitats so species can move between them. This helps wildlife adapt to changes in the environment and reduces the risks to species that live in isolated areas.

4.9.13 In addition to "more, bigger, better, and joined," the strategy also incorporates other nature recovery principles to ensure a comprehensive approach:

- **recover** aims to actively restore degraded habitats to their full ecological potential. This could involve enhancing soil health, rewetting drained peatlands, or removing invasive species to allow ecosystems to function naturally again. The actions also aim to support the recovery of existing species
- **reintroduce or translocate** is about bringing species back to areas where they have been lost or establishing populations in new locations to help them thrive. This can help rebuild balanced ecosystems and restore missing links in food webs; and
- **control** involves managing factors that threaten biodiversity, such as invasive species, grazing pressure, or pollution. Effective measures ensure restored and existing habitats stay healthy and productive.

4.9.14 The Local Habitat Map produced to accompany the draft LNRS identified key mapped priorities of relevance to the site as follows:

- discrete Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) within the site in the form of Ancient/Veteran Trees (Irreplaceable Habitats)
- a number of areas of particular importance for biodiversity, which include field boundary vegetation (hedgerows) and woodland blocks; and
- a small number of 'Lawton Zones' (identified buffer zones around biodiversity priority habitats, reflecting Lawton principles).

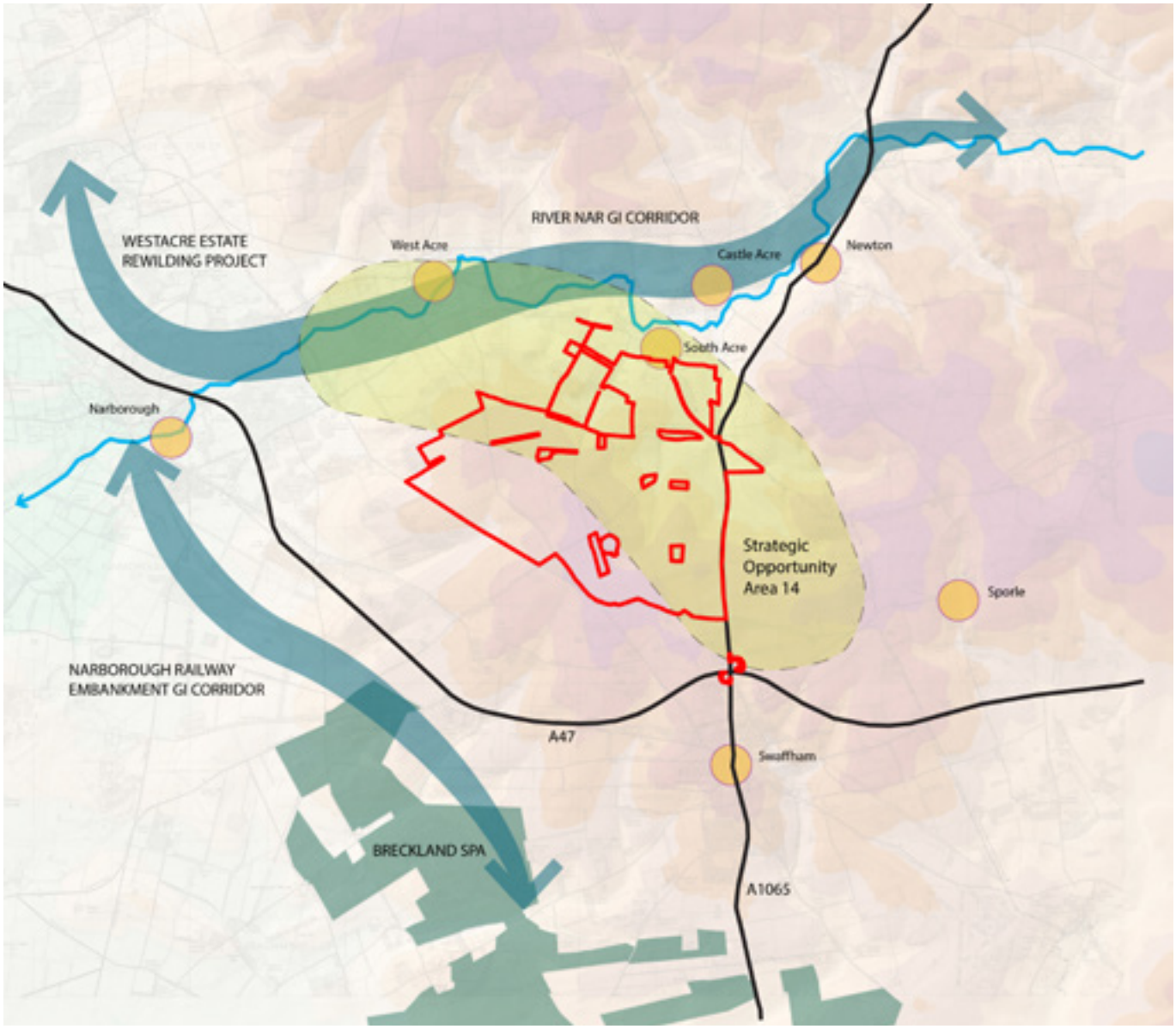


Figure 1.16: Green Infrastructure corridor and Strategic Opportunity Area site overlay

Section 5

5. Assemble: Design Framework

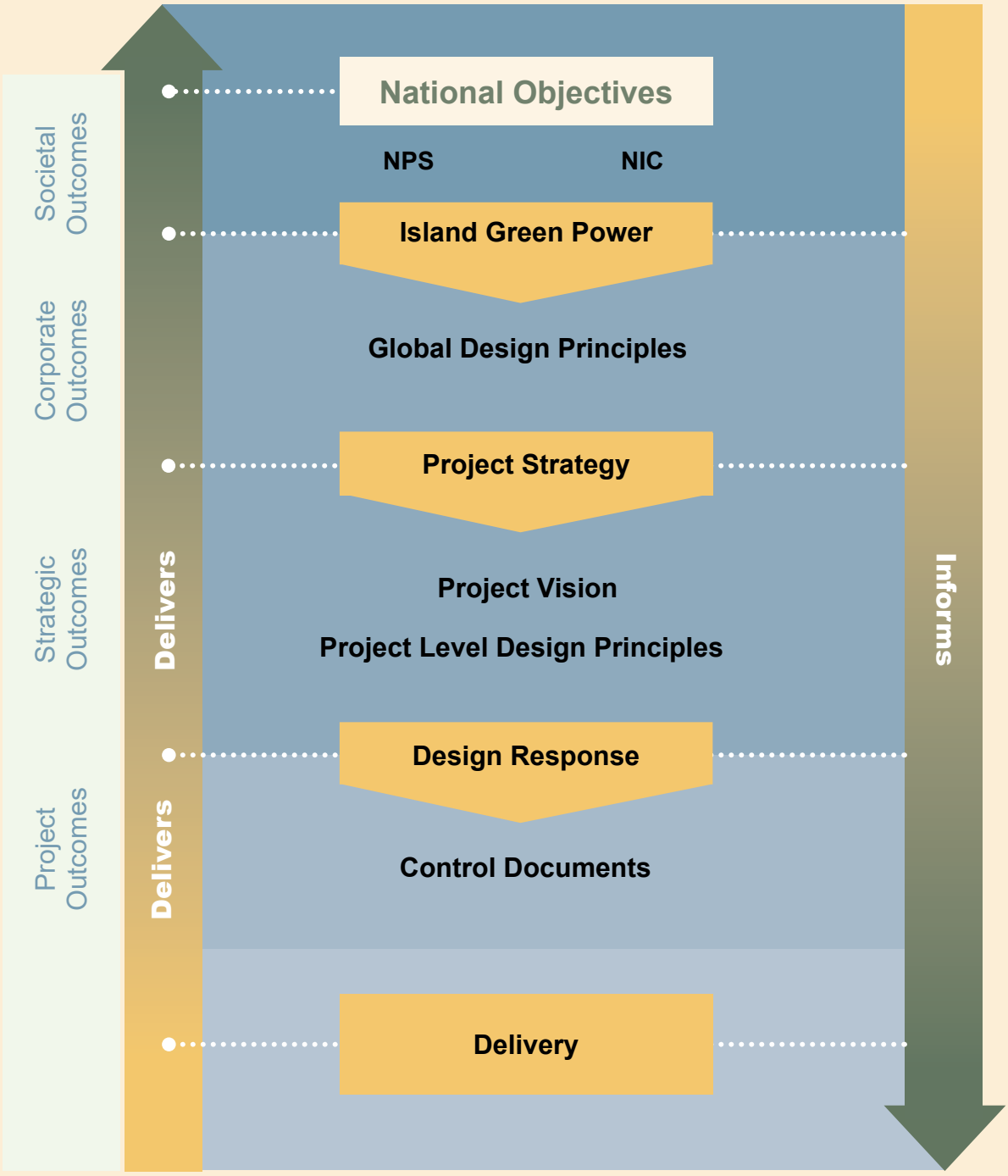
5.1 Design Framework

5.1.1 This section provides an overview of the design framework (illustrated in Figure 1.17) and demonstrates how good design aspirations and intentions have cascaded through the Scheme and will be secured as good design outcomes within the detailed design of the Scheme.

5.1.2 If DCO consent is given, the detailed design for the Scheme would be submitted for approval by the relevant planning authorities post-consent. Securing the detailed design post-consent gives scope for the adoption of the latest and most sustainable technologies during the procurement and construction phase, positively contribute to delivering the UK to net zero by 2050.

5.1.3 Good design outcomes will be secured in the detailed design of the Scheme, in accordance with the Control Documents contained within the **draft DCO [APP/3.1]**. Adherence to the Control Documents will secure good design outcomes, uphold the conclusions of the ES and provide for flexibility. A full list of Control Documents is set out in the **Guide to the Application [APP/1.3].**

Figure 1.17: Design Framework



5.2 Scheme Vision Statement

5.2.1 Following initial analysis of the local context, the Applicant set out a high-level Vision Statement for the Scheme. The statement encapsulates IGP's overarching Global Design Principles that guide decision-making across all of its projects and seeks to deliver positive outcomes at a national and local level.

5.2.2 The vision is for The Droves Solar Farm to support the UK's transition to decarbonised, low-cost renewable energy while leaving a positive legacy for the people of Breckland and its natural environment.

5.2.3 The main purpose of this vision was to ensure that the overall Scheme design is held together by a clear goal.

5.3 Project Level Design Principles

5.3.1 In accordance with the criteria design set out in EN-1 **(refer to Section 2)**, project level design principles (hereby referred to as 'Project Principles') were developed by the Applicant to facilitate the practical application of IGP's Global Design Principles at the project level.

5.3.2 The Project Principles use the IGP Global Design Principles as a framework and are based on an understanding of the Scheme's local context, the people it would affect, and the potential benefits and outcomes it can deliver. They were developed during early engagement with local stakeholders, communities and technical specialists, as part of the Co-Design consultation and feedback received during statutory consultation.

5.3.3 The principles have and will continue to be used where relevant to drive design-related decision-making throughout the lifecycle of the Scheme to secure the best outcomes at detailed design.

5.3.4 Future information on how the Project Principles have shaped the design of the Proposed Development is provided in Section 6 (Research), Section 7 (Coordinate) and Section 8 (Securing Good Design).

5.3.5 The Project Principles for the Scheme are set out in Table 3 under the heading of each IGP Global Design Principle.

Table 3: Design Principles

IGP Global Design Principles	Project Principles
1. Decarbonisation & energy security	1.1 – Reduce carbon emissions during all phases of the Scheme.
2. Environmentally led design	2.1 – Respond to the character of the Site, informed by the Breckland Local Landscape Character Assessment. 2.2 – Retain and enhance existing vegetation wherever possible to retain the fabric of the Site and aid integration of the Scheme into its context. 2.3 – Support objectives of Norfolk's Green Infrastructure Strategy. 2.4 – Improve soil health during the lifetime of the Scheme. 2.5 – Respect setting of heritage assets along the Nar Valley. 2.6 – Protect and support engagement and understanding of local heritage assets. 2.7 – Respect residential amenity. 2.8 – Consider experience of people travelling along adjacent roads, including the A1065, South Acre Road, River Road and Narford Lane. 2.9 – Consider experience of people using the PRoW. 2.10 – Retain fields comprising entirely Grade 1 and fields comprising entirely of Grade 1 and 2 in agricultural use where practicable.

IGP Global Design Principles	Project Principles
3. Biodiversity Net gain and nature recovery	3.1 – Integrate the Scheme into the local environment and allow the movement of wildlife through the Site. 3.2 – Review and incorporate initiatives set out in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy where practicable. 3.3 – Reduce the impact of water runoff on the Nar Valley. 3.4 – Deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10%. 3.5 – Engage with Westacre Estate to explore opportunities to compliment rewilding project objectives.
4. Design flexibility	4.1 – Design for resilience and adaptation to future climate change. 4.2 – Provide flexibility in design parameters to allow for technological advancement to maximise energy production. 4.3 – Ensure the Scheme is resilient to flooding and does not increase flooding elsewhere.

IGP Global Design Principles	Project Principles
5. Social value & community benefits	5.1 – Support the objectives set out in the Future Breckland programme. 5.2 – Provide opportunities to boost local and regional economies. 5.3 – Engage openly, transparently and meaningfully with stakeholders, using feedback to inform the Scheme. 5.4 – Identify opportunities for wider community benefits in consultation with local stakeholders. 5.5 – Behave as a considerate neighbour through all phases of the project. 5.6 – Provide clear lines of communication between the developer and the local community. 5.7 – Provide education and interpretation of the Scheme and Site. 5.8 – Collaborate with High Grove Solar. 5.9 – Route construction away from local villages and Swaffham town centre. 5.10 – Retain all PRoWs on the existing alignment during the operational phase. 5.11 – Improve connectivity and accessibility through the Site.
6. Efficient infrastructure & ethical supply chain	6.1 – Optimise generation and export capacity of the Scheme within the constraints of the Site to make the most efficient use of land and available grid connection.

IGP Global Design Principles	Project Principles
7. Sustainability, durability & reversibility	7.1 – Prioritise sustainable resource management and techniques during all phases of the Scheme. 7.2 – Allow existing woodland blocks to continue to be managed sustainably. 7.3 – Allow for dual use of land where possible.
8. Our commitment to mitigation	Mitigation is encapsulated within the project principles set out above.

5.3.6 These Design Principles were consulted upon during the Scheme's statutory consultation and the responses to these are set out in the **Consultation Report Appendices [APP/5.2]**. While the design principles did not change as a result of the comments made, responses were considered during the design development process which is set out in Section 6 and 7 of this DAD. The following sections of this DAD set out how the Design Principles have informed the design of the Scheme. Section 8 of this DAD explains how the Applicant will secure good design which has been influenced by the Design Principles.