



**East Pye Solar
Environmental Statement
Volume 3: Appendix 2.3 – Legislation, Planning
Policy and Guidance**

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1 Legislation, Planning Policy, and Guidance

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Appendix provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy, and other guidance documents against which the Scheme will be considered within **ES Chapters 6-18**.
- 1.1.2 The section numbering in this document follows the technical chapter numbering within Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement, for ease of reference.

6 Chapter 6: Climate Change

- 6.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 6 Climate Change [EN0110014/APP/6.1.6]**.
- 6.1.2 In addition, the **ES Appendix 7.11: Statement of Need [EN0110014/APP/7.11]** is an accompanying document that demonstrates further compliance of the Scheme with the aforementioned legislation and policies.

International Agreements

The Kyoto Protocol

- 6.1.3 The Kyoto Protocol (Ref 6-1) is a United Nations international treaty adopted in 1997 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It sets binding emission reduction targets for developed countries to reduce GHG emissions, with the goal of mitigating the effects of climate change. The GHG definitions from the Kyoto Protocol have been used to inform this assessment of Climate Change.

Paris Agreement 2015

- 6.1.4 The 2015 Paris Agreement (Ref 6-2) declared a long-term temperature target to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change. This target is to keep a global temperature rise this century 'well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius' (the '1.5 Degrees Target').
- 6.1.5 In 2015 the UK Government signed the Paris Agreement, and in 2016, ratified it. Ratifying the Paris Agreement formally bound the UK to the 'well below 2 degrees' target (in 2018 reduced further to the 1.5 Degrees Target) and requires the UK Government to translate that commitment into legislative requirements. Through national legislation, the responsibility to realise the 1.5 Degrees Target disseminates from the UK Government to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and, ultimately, developers.
- 6.1.6 The Glasgow Climate Pact (Ref 6-3), adopted at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland and the Sharm El-Sheikh Implementation Plan (Ref 6-4), adopted at the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt reaffirmed the goal of the Paris Agreement.

UN Climate Change Conferences (COP)

- 6.1.7 The COP summits bring parties together to accelerate action towards the

- goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- 6.1.8 COP26 (2021) brought parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. COP26 increased ambition and action from countries to keep the hope of limiting the rise in global temperature to 1.5°C. Glasgow (COP26) focused on driving action across the globe on mitigation, adaptation, finance and collaboration. The UK, along with other Nations, adopted the Glasgow Climate Pact (Ref 6-3) at COP26 in November 2021. The Pact increases the climate ambition and action from the Paris Agreement in 2015 and sets out new rules to reduce greenhouse gas emissions including phasing down coal and creation of a global carbon market.
- 6.1.9 COP27 was held in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt in November 2022. Four key themes were identified which were mitigation, adaptation, finance and collaboration. One of the key outcomes was agreement to compensate nations for loss and damage from climate change through establishing a fund.
- 6.1.10 COP28 was held in Dubai, UAE in November 2023. COP28 was the first year in which all nations agreed there was a need to transition away from the use of fossil fuels in energy systems.
- 6.1.11 COP29 (2024) took place in Baku, Azerbaijan where developed nations committed to a new climate finance goal of \$300 billion annually by 2035 to help developing countries cope with climate change impacts and accelerate the energy transition. Additionally, rules for international carbon markets were established. The UK Prime Minister announced the country's updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for 2025, which are commitments made by countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change, aiming to build momentum towards achieving net zero emissions.
- 6.1.12 COP30 (2025) took place in Belém, Brazil, where nations agreed a deal that did not include a direct fossil fuel phase-out.

UK Legislation and Regulations

The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

- 6.1.13 The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (Ref 6-5) require that projects which might have significant effects on the environment to carry out a formal impact assessment. The Infrastructure Planning Regulations cover projects that are classified as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, which are regulated under the Planning Act 2008.

6.1.14 Schedule 4 requires an Environmental Statement to include:

- *'4. A description of the factors specified in regulation 4(2) likely to be significantly affected by the development, climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation)*
- *5. A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment resulting from, inter alia:*
- *(f) the impact of the project on climate (for example the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions) and the vulnerability of the project to climate change;'*

Climate Change Act 2008 and 2050 Target Amendment Order 2019

6.1.15 The Climate Change Act (CCA) 2008 (Ref 6-6) established the context for UK Government action on climate change, providing a legally binding framework for the UK to reduce GHG emissions and develop the UK's ability to adapt to climate change.

6.1.16 In 2019, the CCA 2008 was amended (Ref 6-7) to include a revision of the previous aim of 80% reduction of GHG emissions compared to 1990 levels by 2050. The CCA 2008 now mandates a net zero target by 2050:

- *'The net UK carbon account for the year 2050 is at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline.'*

6.1.17 To reach net zero carbon emissions, the UK Government has set legally binding carbon budgets, capping the amount of GHG emitted in the UK over a 5-year period.

Carbon Budget Order (2009), Carbon Budget Order (2011), Carbon Budget Order (2016), and Carbon Budget Order (2021)

6.1.18 Established under the Climate Change Act 2008, Carbon Budget Orders (CBOs) (2009) (Ref 6-8), Carbon Budget Orders (2011) (Ref 6-9), Carbon Budget Orders (2016) (Ref 6-10) and Carbon Budget Orders (CBOs) (2021) (Ref 6-11) set legally binding limits on the total amount of GHGs the UK can emit over a five-year period, called budgetary periods, towards the goal of net zero by 2050.

6.1.19 **Table 6.1** shows the Carbon budget periods and the binding limits on the total amount of GHGs expressed in Million Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO_{2e}).

Table 6.1: UK National Carbon Budgets

Carbon Budget	Carbon Budget Level	Reduction Below 1990 Level
3 rd carbon budget (2018- 2022)	2,544 MtCO _{2e}	37% by 2020
4 th carbon budget (2023- 2027)	1,950 MtCO _{2e}	51% by 2025
5 th carbon budget (2028- 2032)	1,725 MtCO _{2e}	57% by 2030
6 th carbon budget (2033-2037)	965 MtCO _{2e}	78% by 2035
Recommended* 7 th carbon budget (2038-2042)	535 MtCO _{2e}	87% by 2024

* 7th Carbon budget under review by UK Government so not yet statutory. Recommended level by the Climate Change Committee (CCC).

6.1.20 The 7th Carbon Budget covering the period from 2038 to 2042 is currently under review and the government has until June 30, 2026, to legislate for it. For the purpose of this assessment, the recommended level for the 7th Carbon Budget by the Climate Change Committee (CCC) has been applied (Ref 6-12).

6.1.21 All assumptions past 2042 have used the draft 7th Carbon Budget.

The Carbon Budget Delivery Plan

6.1.22 The Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (CBDP) (Ref 6-13) was published in March 2023 and sets out the UK Government’s detailed proposals to enable the delivery of Carbon Budgets 4, 5 and 6 (i.e. to the end of 2037) in accordance with the UK’s 2050 net zero carbon commitment under the CCA 2008. It details how different sectors will contribute to the overall reduction targets and that the necessary actions are taken to stay within the set limits. This approach helps to balance economic growth with the need to reduce emissions.

6.1.23 The CBDP was the subject of a successful legal challenge in *R (Friends of the Earth) v Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero* [2024] EWHC 995 (Admin) (Ref 6-14) as a consequence of which the Secretary of State will be required to publish a revised plan within 12 months. In the absence of any such revised publication, reference is made to the content of the CBDP as it was published below. It is considered that the nature of the legal challenge does not affect the ability to produce **ES: Chapter 6 Climate Change [EN0110014/APP/6.1.6]**.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

6.1.24 The National Policy Statements (NPS) are a suite of documents issued by the Secretary of State (SoS), setting out the government’s policy for delivery

of major energy infrastructure and represent the primary policy tests against which this Development Consent Order (DCO) Application for the Scheme have been considered. Listed below are the details of the elements of NPS considered relevant to the Climate Change assessment.

National Planning Statement (NPS) for Energy EN-1

- 6.1.25 The NPS guidance makes it easier for decision makers, applicants and the wider public to understand:
- Government policy on the need for nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs);
 - How applications for energy infrastructure will be assessed; and
 - The way in which impacts and mitigations will be judged.
- 6.1.26 With particular reference to NPS EN-1 (Ref 6-15), Sections 2.2 (Net zero by 2050), 2.3 (Meeting net zero), 2.4 (Decarbonising the power section), 4.10 (Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience) and 5.3 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions); Paragraph 4.10.4 recognises the role of climate change adaptation in respect of GHG emissions, coastal change and flood risk.
- 6.1.27 Paragraphs 4.10.5 to 4.10.12 relate to the Applicant's assessment. Paragraphs 4.10.13 to 4.10.19 relate to the SoS's decision-making regarding adaptation measures and resilience in response to climate projections. The guidance states that applications for new generating stations and related infrastructure should be contained in a single application to the SoS or in separate applications submitted in tandem which have been prepared in an integrated way. The SoS should be satisfied that appropriate network connection arrangements are/will be in place for a given project regardless of whether one or multiple (linked) applications are submitted.
- 6.1.28 Paragraphs 5.3.4 to 5.3.7 are relevant to the applicant assessment relevant policy, assessment requirements, mitigation and paragraphs 5.3.8 to 5.3.12 include SoS decision making criteria regarding GHG emissions and mitigation. The guidance states that, all proposals for energy infrastructure projects should include a GHG assessment as part of their ES including:
- A whole life GHG assessment showing construction, operational and decommissioning GHG impacts, including impacts from change of land use;
 - An explanation of the steps that have been taken to drive down the climate change impacts at each of those stages;
 - Measurement of embodied GHG impact from the construction phase;
 - How reduction in energy demand and consumption during operation has been prioritised in comparison with other measures;

- How operational emissions have been reduced as much as possible through the application of best available technology (BAT) for that type of technology;
 - Calculation of operational energy consumption and associated carbon emissions;
 - Whether and how any residual GHG emissions will be (voluntarily) offset or removed using a recognised framework; and
 - Where there are residual emissions, the level of emissions and the impact of those on national and international efforts to limit climate change, both alone and where relevant in combination with other developments at a regional or national level, or sector level, if sectoral targets are developed.
- 6.1.29 Paragraph 5.3.7 requires a GHG Reduction Strategy to be produced. The reduction strategy measures are included within the **outline CEMP [EN0110014/APP/7.1]** and **outline OEMP [EN0110014/APP/7.2]** rather than as a standalone document.
- 6.1.30 The guidance also states that a GHG assessment should be used to drive down GHG emissions at every stage of the Scheme's development and ensure that emissions are minimised as far as possible for the type of technology, taking into account the overall objectives of ensuring our supply of energy always remains secure, reliable and affordable, while transitioning to net zero.
- 6.1.31 Regarding the SoS decision making, the guidance states that the SoS should be content that the GHG emissions have been assessed as far as possible and all reasonable steps to reduce the GHG emissions have been taken. However, in light of the vital role energy infrastructure plays in the process of economy wide decarbonisation, the SoS must accept that there are likely to be some residual emissions from construction and decommissioning of energy infrastructure. Operational emissions have been considered in a managed, economy-wide manner, to ensure consistency with carbon budgets, net zero and our international climate commitments. The SoS does not, therefore need to assess individual applications for planning consent against operational carbon emissions and their contribution to carbon budgets, net zero and international climate commitments.
- NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure EN-3**
- 6.1.32 NPS EN-3 (Ref 6-16) Section 2.10 reaffirms the government commitment to sustained growth in solar capacity to align with the net-zero emissions by 2050 target. It recognises the important role of solar energy in delivering the government's goals for greater energy independence. The government seeks large scale ground-mount solar deployment across the UK. It recognised that solar farms are one of the most established renewable

electricity technologies in the UK and the cheapest for of electricity generation.

- 6.1.33 Section 2.4 (Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience) and specially paragraph 2.4.11 for Solar photovoltaic (PV), emphasise that if the Scheme is proposed in a low-lying exposed site, the increased risk of flooding and the impact of higher temperatures should be particularly considered.
- 6.1.34 Paragraph 2.10.11 notes that irradiance is a key consideration for the applicant in identifying a potential site as the amount of electricity generated on site is directly affected by irradiance levels. This in turn affects the carbon emission savings of the site.

NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure EN-5

- 6.1.35 NPS EN-5 (Ref 6-17) Paragraph 2.3.2 highlights the importance of climate change resilience. It states that the applicant should assess the vulnerability and resilience of the proposed infrastructure to climate change impacts, including:
- Flooding, particularly for substations that are vital to the network; and especially in light of changes to groundwater levels resulting from climate change;
 - Effects of wind and storms on overhead lines;
 - Higher average temperatures leading to increased transmission losses;
 - Earth movement or subsidence caused by flooding or drought (for underground cables); and
 - Coastal erosion - for the landfall of offshore transmission cables and their associated substations in the inshore and coastal locations respectively.
- 6.1.36 The NPSs listed above came into effect in December 2025, last updated 6th January 2026. These NPSs set out the Government's energy policy for the delivery of nationally significant energy infrastructure, the need for new energy infrastructure, and guidance for the determination of an application for a DCO.
- 6.1.37 Draft versions of EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 were published in May 2025, with final versions released in December 2025, effective as of 6th January 2026. These continue to highlight the need for new nationally significant energy projects. With regards to Climate Change, emphasis continues to be placed on the government targets to be the first major economy to be net zero by 2050. This is reliant on large scale delivery of low carbon generation technologies, such as solar.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

6.1.38 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 6-18) as revised in December 2024 (corrected in February 2025) sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the Government for operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State's (SoS) consideration of the Scheme. Section 14 highlights the importance of integrating climate change considerations into the planning system by promoting for development that reduces GHG emissions and enhances resilience against future climate risks. Listed below provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to this chapter.

6.1.39 Paragraph 161 states:

'The planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.'

- p. 162: *'Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future health and resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.'*
- p. 163. *'The need to mitigate and adapt to climate change should also be considered in preparing and assessing planning applications, taking into account the full range of potential climate change impacts.'*
- p. 164 *'New development should be planned for in ways that:*
 - *...b) help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings in plans should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.'*
- p.166. *'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:*

- a) *comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and*
 - b) *take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.*
- p. 168. *‘When determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, local planning authorities should:*
- a) *not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal’s contribution to a net zero future;*
 - b) *recognise that small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions.’*
- 6.1.40 The NPPF states in paragraphs 170 to 182 that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Where development is necessary in such areas, it should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Subsequently, it states that Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development, considering all sources of flood risk and resilience.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 6.1.41 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (Ref 6-19) supports the NPPF. Regarding climate change, the PPG advises how to identify suitable mitigation measures in the planning process to address the impacts of climate change.
- 6.1.42 Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 6-007-20140306 discusses how local planning authorities can identify appropriate mitigation measures in plan-making:
- ‘Every area will have different challenges and opportunities for reducing carbon emissions from new development such as homes, businesses, energy, transport and agricultural related development.*
- ...The distribution and design of new development and the potential for servicing sites through sustainable transport solutions, are particularly important considerations that affect transport emissions. Sustainability appraisal should be used to test different spatial options in plans on emissions.*

Different sectors may have different options for mitigation. For example, measures for reducing emissions in agricultural related development include anaerobic digestion, improved slurry and manure storage and improvements to buildings. In more energy intensive sectors, energy efficiency and generation of renewable energy can make a significant contribution to emissions reduction.'

Clean Power 2030 Action Plan

- 6.1.43 The UK Government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (Ref 6-20) provides a clear policy framework that supports the development of renewable energy projects. It establishes a target, that, over the course of a year under normal weather conditions, at least 95% of Great Britain's (GB) electricity generation is from low-carbon ('clean') sources, and that those sources generate more electricity than GB consumes; reducing the carbon intensity of our generation from 171 gCO_{2e}/kWh in 2023 to well below 50 gCO_{2e}/kWh in 2030 and beyond. This will be achieved through a significant expansion of renewable energy capacity, including 45-47 GW of solar power complemented by 23-27 GW of battery capacity by 2030, and 45-69 GW of solar power complemented by 24-29 GW of batteries by 2035.

UK Third Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022

- 6.1.44 The Climate Change Act 2008 (Ref 6-6) mandates that the UK Government conducts a Climate Change Risk (CCR) Assessment every five years and creates an adaptation program to address identified risks. The UK CCR Assessment for 2022 (Ref 6-21) was released in January 2022. The third CCR Assessment highlights the dangers of inaction regarding climate change and stresses that the UK's pioneering net zero strategy must incorporate adaptation measures to ensure future resilience. This involves further development of the domestic renewable energy sector.

The UK's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)

- 6.1.45 The policy outlines the country's commitment to reducing GHG emissions in accordance with the Paris Agreement on climate change. Specifically, the UK aims to achieve a reduction of GHG emissions by at least 68% by 2030, relative to 1990 levels. As part of this commitment, the NDC (Ref 6-22) emphasizes the development of solar energy as a key strategy for reducing dependence on fossil fuels and lowering the nation's carbon footprint.

Climate Change: Third National Adaptation Programme (2023 – 2028) (NAP3)

- 6.1.46 The NAP3 (Ref 6-23) was published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and sets out the key actions for 2023 to 2028 that the government and others will take to adapt to the impacts of climate change in the UK. The report forms part of the 5-yearly cycle of requirements laid down in the Climate Change Act 2008 (Ref 6-6) and includes the

strategy for the fourth round of climate adaptation under the Adaptation Reporting Power.

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment

6.1.47 The UK Government's 25-year plan (Ref 6-24), published in 2018, sets out a comprehensive and long-term approach to protecting and enhancing the natural environment in England for the next generation. The document sets out 10 25-year goals; one of which is to manage pressures on the environment by mitigating and adapting to climate change. The document sets out, in a non-technical way, how the UK Government will tackle the effects of climate change including by making sure that all policies, programmes and investment decisions take into account the possible extent of climate change this century and ensuring that environmental protections already enshrined in national planning policy will be maintained and strengthened, such as environmental standards for all new builds.

Clean Growth Strategy

6.1.48 The Clean Growth Strategy (Ref 6-24) sets out the UK's policies and proposals to accelerate the delivery of increased economic growth and decreased emissions. The strategy aims to improve productivity across the UK to provide the best place for innovators and new businesses to start-up and grow. The Strategy also seeks to deliver on social and economic benefits, including higher quality more efficient buildings, rolling out emissions vehicles, and delivering a diverse and reliable energy mix. Key policies and proposals include: developing green finance capabilities, support businesses to improve energy productivity, set out action plans for industrial decarbonisation, phasing out fossil fuel heating, improve energy efficiency of homes and support low carbon heating, support the update of ultra-low emissions vehicles, support clean energy innovation, and work towards zero avoidable waste.

UK Government Ten Point Plan

6.1.49 The UK Government's Ten Point Plan for a Green Revolution (Ref 6-25) published in 2020, sets out a series of points to help the UK build back better after the impact of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020. This includes the following points:

- Point 4: Accelerating the Shift to Zero Emission Vehicles; and
- Point 5: Green Public Transport, Cycling and Walking.

6.1.50 The Points above include targets for carbon savings through a combination of supporting manufacturing and uptake of Electric Vehicles, and delivery of safe and direct cycle and walking networks within England.

Powering our Net Zero Future

6.1.51 The UK Government's Energy White Paper *Powering our Net Zero Future*, published in 2020 (Ref 6-26), builds on the Ten Point Plan to set out a strategy for providing cleaner, greener energy, supporting a green recovery through new green jobs and delivers opportunities to save money on bills for customers. The Paper provides an illustrative example of what UK energy use may look like in 2050, which is anticipated to use more decarbonised electricity and hydrogen, incorporation of Direct Air Carbon Capture and Storage, with a markedly less reliance on oil and gas. Cumulatively, the emissions savings to 2032 from implementing the Energy White Paper will be 230 MtCO₂e. This will be achieved by targeting increase in offshore wind output, deploying, and investing in Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage, growing the installation of electric heat pumps, and developing 5GW of low-carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030.

Powering Up Britain

6.1.52 After the creation of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero in February 2023, *Powering Up Britain* presents the departments approach to energy and net zero, and comprises of *Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan* (Ref 6-27), and *Powering Up Britain: Net Zero Growth Plan* (Ref 6-27).

6.1.53 The former develops the goals set out in the British Energy Security Strategy and the Net Zero Strategy to ensure secure, economical, and low carbon nature of the energy transition. Focussing on how the UK can hold a competitive position on its long-term decarbonisation trajectory, it is complemented by *Powering Up Britain: Net Zero Growth Plan*, which clarifies how economic opportunities will be employed to enhance the UKs energy security alongside its commitments to net zero.

UK Government Road to Zero

6.1.54 *The Road to Zero* (Ref 6-28), published in 2018, sets out the UK Governments ambitions to reduce emissions associated with the transport industry. This document sets out how the UK Government will reduce emissions from vehicles on the road, promote the uptake of clean vehicles and support the necessary infrastructure, reduce emissions from HGVs and support local action.

Transport Decarbonisation Plan

6.1.55 'Decarbonising Transport a Better, Greener Britain' (Ref 6-29), published in 2021, sets out additional commitments, actions and timings on decarbonising all forms of transport, including measures to increase cycling and walking, and delivering zero emissions buses and coaches, and zero emission fleets of cars, vans, motorcycle and scooters. This document sets out what consultation the UK Government will undertake to bring these measures forward, key milestones and available funding. The UK Government will support the delivering of 4,000 new zero emission buses and the infrastructure to support them, a net zero railway network by 2050,

stimulate the demand for zero emission trucks, and deliver over £12 billion for decarbonising local transport systems.

Net Zero Strategy

- 6.1.56 The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (Ref 6-30) sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet the net zero target by 2050. The Strategy highlights some of the urgent global action, which is required to avoid catastrophic climate change, including ending coal fired power generation, retiring petrol and diesel engines from all cars, and halting deforestation.
- 6.1.57 Proposals in the Net Zero Strategy include fully decarbonising the UK power system by 2035, setting a path for all new low carbon heating in homes and workplaces from 2035 and removing all road emissions at the tailpipe and kickstarting zero emissions international travel. The UK Government also has the ambition to deploy at least 5 MtCO₂/year of engineered greenhouse gas removals by 2030.

Review of Net Zero (Ref 6-31)

- 6.1.58 Provoked by the recent transformation to the economic landscape and published in January 2023, Review of Net Zero is an independent evaluation of the governments approach to delivering its commitments to net zero to assess the current trajectory and ensure that the accompanying economic opportunities are being maximised.
- 6.1.59 Describing net zero as ‘the growth opportunity of the 21st century’ the review acknowledged the widespread changes to the global economy that net zero will result in and encouraged decisiveness within government policy and intervention. Its main recommendations include a 10-year delivery plan for hydrogen energy, enforcement of nature-based solutions, and a review of green transition opportunities within the banking sector.

Local Planning Policy

- 6.1.60 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC) and South Norfolk Council (SNC) who are the host authorities. Local planning policies which are relevant to Climate Change and have informed the Climate Change assessment are detailed below.

The Greater Norwich Local Plan 2024

- 6.1.61 The objective of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) (Ref 6-32) is to significantly reduce all greenhouse gas emissions by 68% by 2030 and by 78% by 2036 compared to 1990 levels and to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 6.1.62 The Climate Change Statement sets out how the Greater Norwich Local

Plan will promote low carbon development and address climate change as shown in **Table 6.2**.

Table 6.2: The Greater Norwich Local Plan 2024 Climate Change Statement

Measure	GNLP Coverage
Requiring the location and design of development to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the highest viable and energy efficiency including the use of decentralised energy; • Reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car; • Secure the highest possible share of trips made by sustainable travel. 	Design of development: Policies 1, 2, 3 and 4 Policy 2 requires development to be designed to minimise emissions. The policy also requires development to be designed and orientated to minimise energy use, promote low carbon generation and resource, energy and water efficiency, including promoting recycling and solar gain and reducing overheating.
Support delivery of decentralised, renewable, and low-carbon energy generation and grid infrastructure.	Policies 2 and 4 promote improvements to the energy grid, the development of local, renewable and low carbon energy networks to serve major new developments and an increase in free standing renewable energy generation, such as solar farms.
Increase sustainable transport use and local transport solutions.	Policies 2 and 4 support the further development of low carbon transport networks.

Long Stratton Neighbourhood Plan (2021)

6.1.63 The Long Stratton Town Council Neighbourhood Plan (Ref 6-34) states in section ‘Outdoor Recreation, Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity’ Policy LSNP – G117:

- *‘Recognise, protect and incorporate locally characteristic features including greens, hedgerows, woodlands and ponds and locally distinctive landscapes;*
- *Retain and enhance connectivity for biodiversity through public rights of way, hedgerows, protection of water features and wildlife corridors.’*

Tasburgh Neighbourhood Plan (2024)

6.1.64 The Tasburgh Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan (Ref 6-36) states in Policy TAS4 ‘Climate change, flood risk and surface water drainage issues’ the following:

- *‘As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should:*
 - *a. Demonstrate how they can mitigate their own flooding and drainage impacts, avoid an increase of flooding elsewhere and seek to achieve lower than greenfield runoff rates for flooding (see figure 20 flood risk);*

- *b. Respond positively to the advice and guidance on surface water drainage and the mitigation of flood risk obtainable from Norfolk County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority) and the relevant Internal Drainage Board (as statutory Drainage Board for the Plan area); and*
- *c. Where appropriate, mitigate and adapt to climate change.*
- *Proposals for major development should include sustainable drainage systems unless it is impracticable to do so.'*

The Tivetshalls Neighbourhood Plan (2022) (Ref 6-37)

6.1.65 The Tivetshall Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan looks ahead to 2042 and considers Climate Changes and the likely increase in localised flooding.

6.1.66 It states in Policy TIV14 'Surface water drainage' in relation to climate change the following:

- *'Para 5.4.19: It is important to ensure that the occurrence of new development does not exacerbate existing surface water drainage problems or lead to new ones either through surface water run off or displacement;*
- *TIV14: Development proposals within the immediate locality of the areas identified below as having surface water drainage issues, should take account of all relevant evidence of flooding. Development must not cause or contribute to new flooding or drainage issues and should mitigate its own flooding and drainage impacts.'*

South Norfolk Local Plan: Development Management Policies Document (2015) (Ref 6-38)

6.1.67 The key policy of the South Norfolk Local Plan: Development Management Policies Document is Policy DM4.1 'Renewable Energy', which states the following:

- *'Proposals for renewable energy generating development requiring planning permission other than for proposals for wind energy development will be supported and considered (taking account of the impact of relevant ancillary equipment) in the context of sustainable development and climate change on the wider environmental, social and economic benefits of maximising use of renewable energy. The Council will encourage the use on-site communal-scale energy generation measures.*
 - *(1) The effect of the proposal will be considered on:*
 - *a) The effect on the character and appearance of the landscape;*

- *b) Designated and undesignated heritage assets;*
- *c) The amenities and living conditions of nearby residents by way of noise, outlook, and overbearing effect or unacceptable risk to health or amenity by way of other pollutants such as dust and odour.*
- *Permission will be granted where there are no significant adverse effects or where any adverse effects are outweighed by the benefits. When attributing weight to any harm, including heritage assets regard will be given to national policy and guidance, statutory duty and legislation, and other policies in the Local Plan including Policy DM4.10;*
 - *(2) Where appropriate planning conditions will be imposed requiring the decommissioning and removal / dismantling of all plant and ancillary equipment, and if necessary the restoration of land, on the cessation of use.'*

Norfolk County Council: Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2023 – 2038 (2025) (Ref 6-38)

- 6.1.68 The Norfolk County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2023-2038 reflects the county's commitment to the strategic objectives set for waste management and minerals development up to 2038 and includes policies relevant to both minerals and waste management development covering the following issues: development management criteria, transport, climate change mitigation and adaptation, The Brecks protected habitats and species, and agricultural soils.
- 6.1.69 Policy MW1: Development Management Criteria states the following with regards to climate change:
- *'Flood risk from all sources to those working on site or an increase in flood risk elsewhere, as demonstrated by a Flood Risk Assessment (where required by the National Planning Policy Framework) and making an allowance for climate change.'*
- 6.1.70 Section 8: Climate change mitigation and adaptation – Strategic Policy, states the following with reference to climate change:
- Paragraph 8.5: *'Norfolk is one of the driest counties in the UK and there is a need to minimise demands on potable water resources, and water resources in general, particularly in the context of climate change. Large parts of Norfolk are at risk from flooding, particularly coastal and river localities, and particularly from surface water run-off after storm events; again, an issue that will be compounded by climate change.'*
 - Paragraph 8.6: *'The design and siting of new development can contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change. New minerals development and waste management facilities should therefore include appropriate*

measures to ensure mitigation and adaption to climate change. The National Design Guide explains that well-designed places and buildings conserve natural resources including land, water, energy and materials and that their design responds to the impacts of climate change by being energy efficient and minimising carbon emissions. The National Design Guide identifies measures to achieve climate change mitigation, primarily by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and minimising embodied energy; and adaptation to anticipated events, such as rising temperatures and the increasing risk of flooding. As the requirements for site specific Flood Risk Assessments include climate change scenarios, this is dealt with as part of the Development Management Criteria Policy MW1.'

- Paragraph 8.7: *'Proposed developments should follow the energy hierarchy by:*
 - *1. reducing the need for energy usage through their design, construction and operation;*
 - *2. using energy efficient mechanical and electrical systems, and*
 - *3. by using renewable energy.'*

6.1.71 Policy MW3: Climate change mitigation and adaptation – Strategic Policy, states the following in relation to climate change:

- *'Proposals should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.*
- *New...facilities (including extensions to existing sites) will, through their design, construction and operation, be expected to: minimise their potential contribution to climate change through reducing carbon and methane emissions, incorporate energy and water efficient design strategies and be adaptable to future climatic conditions.*
- *Proposals for new...developments (including extensions to existing sites) will therefore be expected to:*
 - *be planned so as to minimise greenhouse gas emissions;*
 - *detail how the proposed development will minimise and manage energy use (through the submission of an energy, climate change and sustainability statement) and set out how the proposal will make use of renewable energy, including generating the energy used on site from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources. Where on-site renewable or low-carbon energy generation is not practicable, evidence must be provided to the County Planning Authority;*

- *use sustainable drainage systems, rainwater harvesting, stormwater harvesting, including from impermeable surfaces wherever feasible and layouts that accommodate wastewater recycling where a connection to the public sewerage network is required;*
- *take account of potential changes in climate, including flood risk from all sources, but particularly rising sea levels, larger river flows and surface water runoff, increasingly variable groundwater levels and coastal erosion;*
- *take opportunities to incorporate trees, retain existing trees and include measures to assist habitats and species to adapt to the potential effects of climate change wherever possible; and*
- *set out how the transportation related to the development will help reduce carbon emissions and incorporate proposals for sustainable travel, including travel plans where appropriate.'*

Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy 2023 (Ref 6-33)

6.1.72 The Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy (2023) reflects the county's commitment to address climate change and reduce carbon emissions. It aims to increase the adoption of renewable energy sources such as solar energy.

6.1.73 The NCC Climate Strategy details 7 focus areas:

1. 'Our Estate' – a commitment to making their estate net zero by 2030 including from buildings, streetlights and vehicle fleet.
2. Indirect Emissions (Scope 3) - representing the organisations wider carbon footprint including carbon resulting from their supply chain, companies they own, buildings to lease, and staff travel.
3. County-wide emissions – council support of county-wide carbon reduction including within transport and energy.
4. Promoting a green economy.
5. Adapting to climate change.
6. Space for nature to recover and grow – support nature recovery across the county and harness its potential for storing carbon.
7. Engage and collaborate.

Norfolk County Council Climate Emergency

6.1.74 NCC has not formally declared a climate emergency. However, NCC has made a commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions on their estate by

2030, and to work collectively with regional partners towards carbon neutrality in their wider areas by 2030.

- 6.1.75 SNC has published an Environmental Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023-2025 (Ref 6-39) detailing their commitment to contribute towards the Government's net zero 2050 target by providing regional and national leadership on the energy transition and achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030 as a council.

Other Guidance

- 6.1.76 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following other guidance documents.

Environmental Impact Assessment Guide to: Assessing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Evaluating their Significance. Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2022) Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) (Ref 6-42)

- 6.1.77 This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidance provides a framework for evaluating the greenhouse gas emissions from a development project. It includes methods for quantifying emissions, assessing their significance, and identifying mitigation measures

- 6.1.78 The ISEP guidance defines significance of GHG emissions as:

'The crux of significance is not whether a project emits GHG emissions, nor even the magnitude of GHG emissions alone, but whether it contributes to reducing GHG emissions relative to a comparable baseline consistent with a trajectory towards net zero by 2050.

Often a project will cause a change in GHG emissions compared to the baseline which should be assessed. When setting this impact into context to determine significance, it is important to consider the net zero trajectory in line with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C pathway'.

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) (Ref 6-40) and World Resources Institute (WRI) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol guidance

- 6.1.79 The Greenhouse Gas Protocol (Ref 6-41) identifies emissions sources as falling under three 'scopes', which are defined to enable GHG accounting and reporting. These scopes are defined below:

- **Scope 1: Direct GHG emissions:** direct GHG emissions occur from sources that are owned or controlled by the company, for example, emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers, furnaces, vehicles, etc.; emissions from chemical production in owned or controlled

process equipment. GHG emissions not covered by the Kyoto Protocol, e.g. CFCs, NOx, etc. shall not be included in scope 1 but may be reported separately.

- **Scope 2: Electricity indirect GHG emissions:** Scope 2 accounts for GHG emissions from the generation of purchased electricity consumed by the company. Purchased electricity is defined as electricity that is purchased or otherwise brought into the organisational boundary of the company. Scope 2 emissions physically occur at the facility where electricity is generated.
- **Scope 3: Other indirect GHG emissions:** Scope 3 is an optional reporting category that allows for the treatment of all other indirect emissions. Scope 3 emissions are a consequence of the activities of the company but occur from sources not owned or controlled by the company. Some examples of scope 3 activities are extraction and production of purchased materials; transportation of purchased fuels; and use of sold products and services.

Climate Change Adaption Practitioner Guidance (2022) (ISEP)

- 6.1.80 This guidance (Ref 6-42) provides steps for assessing climate risks, developing adaptation strategies, and implementing measures to enhance resilience.

Environmental Impact Assessment Guide to: Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation (2020) (ISEP)

- 6.1.81 This EIA guidance (Ref 6-43) provides steps for assessing climate resilience and in-combination climate impacts.

Greenhouse Gas Reporting Conversion Factors 2025

- 6.1.82 The UK Government issues emission conversion factors for use to report on greenhouse gas emissions. The 2025 conversion factors (Ref 6-44) were published in June 2025.

7 Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual

- 7.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [EN0110014/APP/6.1.7]**.

Legislation and Regulations

- 7.1.2 This assessment has been undertaken considering current legislation, together with National, Regional and Local Plans and policies. Relevant legislation applicable to the Scheme includes:

- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (Ref 7-1);
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Ref 7-2);
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (Ref 7-3);
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Ref 7-4);
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Ref 7-5);
- European Landscape Convention 2006 (Ref 7-6);
- Environment Act 2021 (Ref 7-7); and
- Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (Ref 7-8).

Planning Policy

National Policy Statements

- 7.1.3 National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy tests against which the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme will be considered. The Overarching NPS EN-1 2025 (Ref 7-9) sets out the Government's policy for delivery of major infrastructure and is the primary basis for decision-making relating to energy products. Listed below are the details of the elements of NPS considered relevant to the Landscape and Visual assessment.

- Chapter 5.10 Landscape and Visual, including:
 - 5.10.4: *'Landscape effects arise not only from the sensitivity of the landscape but also the nature and magnitude of change proposed by the development, whose specific siting and design make the assessment a case-by-case judgement.'*

- 5.10.5: *'Virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects will have adverse effects on the landscape, but there may also be beneficial landscape character impacts arising from mitigation.'*
- 5.10.6: *'Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate.'*
- 5.10.7: *'National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes have been confirmed by the government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and natural beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes. Projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints.'*
- 5.10.16: *'The applicant should carry out a landscape and visual impact assessment and report it in the ES, including cumulative effects...Several guides have been produced to assist in addressing landscape issues.'*
- 5.10.17: *'The landscape and visual assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project. The applicant's assessment should also take account of any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development documents in England...'*
- 5.10.19: *'The applicant should consider landscape and visual matters in the early stages of siting and design, where site choices and design principles are being established. This will allow the applicant to demonstrate in the ES how negative effects have been minimised and opportunities for positive benefits or enhancement have been recognised and incorporated into the design, delivery and operation of the scheme.'*
- 5.10.20: *'The assessment should include the effects on landscape components and character (including key characteristics) during construction and operation. For project which may affect a National Park, The Broads or a National Landscape the assessment should include effects on the natural beauty and special qualities of these areas.'*
- 5.10.21: *'The assessment should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the project during construction and of the presence and operation of the project and potential impacts on views and visual amenity. This should include light pollution effects, including on dark skies, local amenity, and nature conservation.'*

- Chapter 5.11: Land Use, including Open Space, Green Infrastructure, and Green Belt states at paragraph 5.11.27 that:
 - *‘Existing trees and woodlands should be retained wherever possible. The applicant should assess the impacts on, and loss of, all trees and woodlands within the project boundary and develop mitigation measures to minimise adverse impacts and any risk of net deforestation as a result of the scheme. Mitigation may include, but is not limited to, the use of buffers to enhance resilience, improvements to connectivity, and improved woodland management.’*
- 7.1.4 Paragraph 5.11.27 is relevant to the principles of the design approach and strategy, which seeks to retain trees, hedgerows, and woodland wherever possible in accordance with NPS on Land Use, in order to minimise adverse impacts and to provide screening benefits.
- 7.1.5 NPS EN-3 for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (Ref 7-10), and NPS EN-5 For Electricity Networks Infrastructure, together with EN-1 are the primary decision-making policy document for the Secretary of State on nationally significant onshore renewable electricity generating stations in England and Wales and nationally significant offshore renewable electricity generating stations in waters in or adjacent to England.
- 7.1.6 The following paragraphs from NPS EN-3 are considered of relevance to the Scheme:
 - 2.10.88: *‘Landscape and visual impacts should be considered carefully pre-application. Potential impacts on the statutory purposes of nationally designated landscapes and their settings should form part of the pre-application process.’*
 - 2.10.89: *‘Applicants should carry out a landscape and visual assessment and report it in the ES. Photomontage visualisations may be required to demonstrate the effects of a solar farm, on sensitive or valued landscapes, particularly designated landscapes, the setting of heritage assets and any nearby residential areas or viewpoints.’*
 - 2.10.92 and 2.10.93: *‘The applicant should consider as part of the design, layout, construction, and future maintenance plans how to protect and retain, wherever possible, the growth of vegetation on site boundaries, as well as the growth of existing hedges, established vegetation, including mature trees within boundaries. Applicants should also consider opportunities for individual trees within the boundaries to grow on maturity. The impact of the Scheme on established trees and hedges should be informed by a tree survey and arboricultural/hedge assessment as appropriate.’*

- 2.10.123: *‘Applicants should consider the potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts through, for example, screening with native hedges, trees and woodlands.’*
- 2.10.124: *‘Applicants should aim to minimise the use and height of security fencing. Where possible applicants should utilise existing features, such as hedges or landscaping, to assist in site security or screen security fencing.’*
- 2.10.125: *‘Applicants should minimise the use of security lighting. Any lighting should utilise a passive infra-red (PIR) technology and should be designed and installed in a manner which minimises impact.’*

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

7.1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as revised in December 2024 sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the Government for operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State’s (SoS) consideration of the Scheme. Listed below provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to this chapter, and how and where they are covered in the ES.

7.1.8 Section 2: Achieving sustainable development, Paragraph 8 (c):

- *‘An environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.’*

7.1.9 Section 12: Achieving well-designed places, Paragraph 135 states that:

- *‘Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*
 - *Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short-term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - *Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.’*

7.1.10 Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment:

- Paragraph 187 states that: *‘Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils...’*
- 7.1.11 A draft revised NPPF (Ref 7-11) was published in December 2025 for consultation. The consultation closes on the 10th March 2026. Chapter 4 Achieving sustainable development corresponds to Section 2 of the current NPPF.
- *‘Policies in this chapter is to meet development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including by maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlements, enabling development which will support the rural economy, rural communities and the provision of infrastructure, and limiting development away from settlements to help safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.’*
- 7.1.12 Chapter 14 Achieving well-designed places corresponds with Section 12.
- *‘Policies in this chapter is to promote well-designed, healthy, inclusive and sustainable places, through setting clear expectations about design outcomes.’*
- 7.1.13 DP3: Key principles for well-designed places states that:
- *‘To respond to their context and create well-designed places development proposals should:*
 - *Context: respond to the history, character and features of the site and its setting, so that it integrates into and enhances its surroundings;*
 - *Liveability: support healthy, mixed, vibrant and integrated communities, which will function well over the lifetime of the development, by incorporating a range of uses and tenures, employing features which promote social interaction, and which are robust, durable and easy to look after;*
 - *Climate: contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and the transition to net zero, by using massing, landscaping and materials which conserve energy and other resources, and which minimise risks from the impacts of climate change including overheating;*
 - *Nature: incorporate and/or connect to a network of high quality, accessible, multifunctional green infrastructure to provide opportunities for recreation and healthy living, strengthen habitats, improve climate resilience and improve air and water quality. This should include maintaining and enhancing tree cover and*

incorporating sustainable drainage systems in accordance with policies NE3 and F8;

- *Movement: provide transport infrastructure and choices which support the design vision for the site, provide good connections to the wider settlement, and prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport; and the use of relevant tools and processes.'*
- *Identity: create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place and pride, including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting.*
- *Development proposals that are not well designed should be refused, when assessed against this policy and local design policies, guides, codes and masterplans set out in the development plan. Substantial weight should be given to compliance with these policies when assessing the design quality of proposals.'*

7.1.14 Chapter 14 Achieving well-designed places corresponds with Section 12.

- *'The objective of the policies in this chapter is to influence the design and location of new development to help drive nature's recovery and contribute to wider environmental outcomes, safeguarding our most important habitats, species and landscapes and recognising the centrality of natural capital to delivering sustainable growth.'*

7.1.15 N1: Identifying environmental opportunities and safeguards states that

- *'Development plans should safeguard and enhance the natural environment and reflect the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, by using Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Protected Landscape Management Plans, River Basin Management Plans, National Forest Strategies, Community Forest Plans and other relevant evidence at the most appropriate level.'*

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

7.1.16 The PPG for the Natural Environment (Ref 7-12) defines Green Infrastructure as *'a natural capital asset that provides multiple benefits, at a range of scales. For communities, these benefits can include enhanced wellbeing, outdoor recreation and access, enhanced biodiversity and landscapes, food and energy production, urban cooling, and the management of flood risk'*.

7.1.17 The guidance states that *'Green infrastructure opportunities and requirements need to be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals, as an integral part of development and infrastructure provision,*

and taking into account existing natural assets and the most suitable locations and types of new provision’.

- 7.1.18 With regard to landscape, the PPG identifies ‘*National Planning Policy Framework is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes’* and the need to undertake an LVIA.

Local Planning Policy

- 7.1.19 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC), and South Norfolk Council (SNC) who is the host authority. Local planning plan policies which are relevant to Landscape and Visual and have informed the Landscape and Visual assessment are detailed below.

Greater Norwich Local Plan

- 7.1.20 The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) (Ref 7-13) was adopted by South Norfolk Council on 25 March 2024. The adopted GNLP consists of three documents: The Strategy, The Sites Plan and The Monitoring Framework.
- 7.1.21 The Strategy consists of seven policies, of which the following are relevant to this Chapter:
- Policy 3 – Environmental Protection and Enhancement.
 - Policy 4 – Strategic Infrastructure.

The South Norfolk Local Plan

- 7.1.22 The South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document (DMPD) (Ref 7-14) was adopted on 26th October 2015 and forms part of the South Norfolk Local Plan. The Key Diagram, which sets out the spatial strategy for land use and transport planning in the DMPD, will be superseded by the Key Diagram in the GNLP Strategy. However, the remainder of the document is to be carried forward and used in conjunction with the adopted plan.
- 7.1.23 The relevant policies in the DMPD are as follows:
- Policy DM1.4 – Environmental quality and local distinctiveness.
 - Policy DM3.8 – Design principles applying to all development.
 - Policy DM3.13 – Amenity, noise and quality of life.
 - Policy DM4.4 – Natural environmental assets: designated and locally important open space.

- Policy DM4.5 – Landscape character and river valleys.
- Policy DM4.8 – Protection of trees and hedgerows.
- Policy DM4.9 – Incorporating landscape into design; and
- Policy DM4.10 – Heritage Assets.

Landscape Susceptibility in relation to Energy Generation Storage and Transmission Supplementary Planning Document (Consultation version)

7.1.24 The Landscape Susceptibility in relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission Supplementary Planning Document (Energy SPD) (Ref 7-15) consultation, concluded in September 2025.

7.1.25 At the time of writing, the SPD has not yet been formally adopted. It is important to note that the SPD was not developed specifically for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). It adopts a tailored approach to assessing landscape susceptibility, and it is not considered to be directly applicable to the Scheme due to the following reasons:

- The Scheme is a NSIP scale solar development, and the development scenario considered in the SPD is below the NSIP threshold. The largest scale assessed is 50MW with the threshold for solar NSIPs being 100MW under the Infrastructure Planning (Onshore Wind and Solar Generation) Order 2025.
- The Energy SPD is based on ‘An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment’ (Natural England 2019) methodology instead of GLVIA, which means the susceptibility is based on the type of development, instead of a specific scheme. Embedded mitigation is not included in the assessment parameters.
- The Energy SPD evaluates the susceptibility of individual components separately, which is not appropriate for the Scheme as multiple development types are assessed holistically with several elements affecting a specific receptor.
- Differences in parameters for each type of development considered in the Energy SPD versus the Scheme parameters. In general, the Scheme has a larger parameter for generating capacity, scale, and operational lifespan than the parameters in the Energy SPD.

7.1.26 Despite the Energy SPD not being directly relevant to the Scheme, it has been reviewed and where appropriate updates have been incorporated into this Chapter, such as updates to judgements on landscape sensitivity.

Other Guidance

7.1.27 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following other guidance documents.

7.1.28 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition, 2013) (Ref 7-16) and its associated clarifications, provide guidelines for consideration of effects on landscape and visual amenity.

7.1.29 Technical Guidance Note (TGN LITGN-2024-01): Notes and Clarifications (Ref 7-17) on aspects of the 3rd Edition Guidelines on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was published in August 2024. The TGN provides a compilation of clarifications on GLVIA3 which includes:

- Statements of clarification from 2013-2015', previously held on the Landscape Institute website.
- Answers provided by Landscape Institute's GLVIA Panel to questions raised during the Landscape Institute's December 2020 webinar 'GLVIA Misconceptions and Best Practice'.
- Answers provided by the Landscape Institute's GLVIA Panel to questions raised by Members via responses to the 2021 survey about GLVIA3 and sent to the Landscape Institute Technical email address.

7.1.30 The methodology for **ES: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [EN0110014/APP/6.1.6]** accords with relevant aspects of the Landscape Institute's TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (Ref 7-18), TGN 02/21: Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations (Ref 7-19), and TGN 04/2020 Infrastructure (Ref 7-20).

8 Chapter 8: Ecology and Biodiversity

- 8.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 8 Ecology and Biodiversity [EN0110014/APP/6.1.8]**.

Legislation and Regulations

- 8.1.1 Legislation to inform the Ecology and Biodiversity assessment includes:
- The Ramsar Convention (Convention on Wetlands) 1971
 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Ref 8-1) ('The Habitats Regulations') which has been amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (Ref 8-2).
 - The Environment Act 2021 (Ref 8-3)
 - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (Ref 8-4);
 - Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (Ref 8-5);
 - The Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 (Ref 8-6);
 - The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (Ref 8-7);
 - The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (Ref 8-8);
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (Ref 8-9);
 - The Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 (Ref 8-10);
 - The Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 (Ref 8-11);
 - Wild Mammals (Protection) Act, 1996 (as amended) (Ref 8-12);
 - The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (Ref 8-13);
 - Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 (Ref 8-14); and
 - The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024 (Ref 8-15)

Policy

8.1.2 National and local policy relevant to this chapter is listed below:

- Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1) 2025 (Ref 8-16). This describes the Government's national policy for the delivery of major energy infrastructure, forming the primary policy for SoS decision making for such developments. Parts 4 and 5 of NPS EN-1 details the policies on the assessment of common impacts across the range of energy-technologies, with section 4.3 entitled 'Environmental Effects/Considerations', specifying the policy concerning assessment of likely significant effects, section 4.6 entitled 'Environmental and Biodiversity Net Gain', specifying policy with regard to net gains for biodiversity, and section 5.4 entitled 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation', specifying the predominant policy concerning impacts of major energy infrastructure on Biodiversity. This includes guidance on the assessment and mitigation of these impacts;
- NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) 2025 (Ref 8-17). This is a relevant technology-specific NPS, of which Section 1.7 details government policy with regard to sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), and Section 2.10 of NPS EN-3 details government policy on developments for Solar Photovoltaic Generation and incorporates specific considerations in regard to biodiversity, ecological, geological and water management;
- NPS for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5) 2025 (Ref 8-18). This details government policy on electrical infrastructure. With regard to biodiversity, NPS EN-5 broadly refers to policies set out in NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3, however section 2.5 details environment and BNG considerations and section 2.11 details Secretary of State decision making.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 (Ref 8-19). NPPF takes forward the Government's strategic objective to halt overall biodiversity loss, as set out at Paragraph 187, which states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: *'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs'*. The approach to dealing with biodiversity in the context of planning applications is set out at Paragraph 193:
- *'When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*

- *a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
 - *b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
 - *c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
 - *d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.'*
- Government Circular: ODPM Circular 06/2005; Defra Circular 01/2005 (2005) Biodiversity and Geological conservation – Statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system (Ref 8-20);
 - The 'Local planning policies within the South Norfolk Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (Adoption Version October 2015)' (Ref 8-21); and
 - The Greater Norwich Local Plan (Document 1 – The Strategy) (Ref 8-22).

Guidance

8.1.3 Guidance and advice relevant to this chapter are listed below:

- Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine (V 1.3) (CIEEM) 2024 (Ref 8-23);
- Biodiversity Guidance for Solar Developments (British Research Establishment (BRE)) 2014 (Ref 8-24);
- Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Technical Advice Page for Scoping Solar Development (Planning Inspectorate) 2025 (Ref 8-25);

- Natural Capital Best Practice Guidance: Increasing biodiversity at all stages of a solar farm's lifecycle (Solar Energy UK) (Ref 8-26);
- Evidence review of the impact of solar farms on birds, bats and general ecology 2016 (NEER012) (Natural England) 2017 (Ref 8-27)
- Solar Habitat 2025: Ecological trends on solar farms in the UK (Solar Energy UK) 2025 (Ref 8-28);
- The Effect of Solar Farms on Local Biodiversity: A Comparative Study (Clarkson and Woods and Wychwood Biodiversity) 2015 (Ref 8-29);
- Solar farm management influences breeding bird responses in an arable-dominated landscape (J Copping et al) (Ref 8-30);
- Great crested newts: district level licensing for local planning authorities (NE and DEFRA) 2022 (Ref 8-31);
- Ancient woodland, Ancient Trees and Veteran Trees: advice for making planning decisions (DEFRA & The Forestry Commission) 2022 (Ref 8-32);
- Wildlife Licensing: comment on new policies for European protected species licences (NE) 2016 (Ref 8-33);
- Protected Species and Development: advice for local planning authorities (DEFRA and NE) 2014 (Ref 8-34);
- Interim Advice Note for Designing Strategically Significant Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) (SNC) 2024 (Ref 8-35);
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tools and Guides (DEFRA) 2023 (Ref 8-36);
- Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, IEMA, CIRIA) 2016 (Ref 8-37);
- British Standard BS42020:2013 Biodiversity: A Code of Practice for Planning and Development (BSI) 2013 (Ref 8-38);
- BS 8683:2021 Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain – Specification (BSI) 2021 (Ref 8-39);
- Biodiversity Data Search Guidance for Ecological Consultants (Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning) 2019 (Ref 8-40);
- Norfolk Habitat and Species Action Plans (Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership) (Ref 8-41);
- Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership) (Ref 8-42); and

- Claylands Wilder Connections (NWT) (Ref 8-43).
- 8.1.4 In addition to these resources ES: **Chapter 8 Ecology and Biodiversity [EN0110014/APP/6.1.8]** (and associated technical appendices) will refer to multiple species/habitat specific guidance documents, informed by the results of the baseline ecology surveys.

9 Chapter 9: Water Environment

- 9.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 9 Water Environment [EN0110014/APP/6.1.8]**.

Legislation and Regulations

- 9.1.1 The Water Resources Act 1991 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 (Ref 9-1) requires the written consent of the EA for any works or structures in, over, under or within 8 metres of any watercourse designated as a main river. The EA is responsible for permitting these types of work.
- 9.1.2 The Land Drainage Act 1991 (Ref 9-2) places responsibility for maintaining flows in watercourses as landowners. Classified watercourses are maintained by the EA are termed 'main rivers' with permits required to undertake works within, on, under or on the banks of these rivers. For other watercourses, known as ordinary watercourses, Ordinary Watercourse consent is required which are administered by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs).
- 9.1.3 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (Ref 9-3) sets out a number of changes to the way that new developments and water infrastructure will interact, including the proposed future mechanism for using sustainable drainage systems where practical. The Act outlines the responsibilities for local authorities with regards to land drainage and flood risk management.
- 9.1.4 The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 (Ref 9-4) [2007/60/EC] ('The Flood Directive') requires local authorities to assess, map and plan for local flood risk, including the preparation of flood risk/hazard maps, flood risk management plans and Strategic/Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments.
- 9.1.5 Water Supply Regulations 2016 (Ref 9-5) implement the EU Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC) as amended, ensuring water supplied for domestic use and food production in England and Wales is safe for consumption.
- 9.1.6 The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (Ref 9-6) implement the Water Framework Directive (WFD), which establishes a framework for community action in the field of water policy. The WFD seeks to enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems, promote sustainable water use and contributing to mitigating the effects of flooding and drought.
- 9.1.7 The Water Resources (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (Ref 9-7) ensures that major water

management projects undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to identify and mitigate potential adverse environmental effects, including effects on water quantity, quality and the local water cycle.

- 9.1.8 The UK Nitrates Directive (1991) (91/676/EEC) (implemented through the Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2015) (Ref 9-8) aims to protect water quality by preventing nitrates from agricultural sources that pollute ground and surface waters. The Directive requires the identification of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, the implementation programs for nutrient management and aims to promote sustainable farming practices; and
- 9.1.9 The Groundwater (Water Framework Directive) (England) Direction 2016 which forms an amendment to Annex II of the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC (Ref 9-9) sets out measures for the prevention of pollution to groundwater and monitoring.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

- 9.1.10 National Policy Statements - National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy tests against which the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme has been considered pursuant to section 104 of the Planning Act 2008. Listed below are the details of the elements of NPS considered relevant to the Water Environment assessment:
- Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), dated December 2025 (Ref 9-10). The relevant section to this chapter is Section 5.8 Flood Risk and 5.16 Water Quality and Resources,
 - National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure EN-3, dated 2024, dated December 2025 (Ref 9-10). Paragraph 2.4.4 refers to policy in relation to flood risk contained within EN-1. The relevant section to this chapter is Section 2.10, with particular reference to paragraphs 2.10.76 (requirement for an FRA in EIA), 2.10.77 (use of permeable surface for new access tracks and localised SuDS) and 2.10.78-79 (avoiding need to impact/culvert existing watercourses); and
 - National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks EN-5, dated January 2026 (Ref 9-10). The relevant section to this chapter is Section 2.3 which refers to EN-1 regarding the assessment of flood risk and consideration of resilience to climate change. As such, no new policy in relation to flood risk is contained within EN-5.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 9.1.11 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 9-11) as revised in December 2024 sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the Government for operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land.
- 9.1.12 The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State's (SoS) consideration of the Scheme.
- 9.1.13 Listed below provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to this chapter, and how and where they are covered in the ES:
- NPPF section 14 paragraphs 170-182 aim to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding by directing development away from areas at highest risk, applying a sequential, risk-based approach to location of development, ensuring that the development can remain safe/operational for its lifetime and that it will not increase flood risk elsewhere. **ES Appendix 9.1 Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Outline Surface Water Drainage Strategy (DS) Report [EN0110014/APP/6.3.9.1]** has been prepared in accordance with this section of the NPPF;
 - An update to the NPPF was released in December 2025 which shows that the wording of these paragraphs is anticipated to be updated to reflect the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 'Flood Risk and Coastal Change' September 2025 update with regards to the application of the Sequential and Exception Tests.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 9.1.14 The NPPF PPG 'Flood Risk and Coastal Change' was last updated September 2025) (Ref 9-12) and includes the EA 'Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances guidance (last updated May 2022) (Ref 9-13);
- 9.1.15 The NPPF PPG sets out the requirements for the sequential and exceptions tests, ensures that climate change is considered and outlines the requirements for a site-specific FRA. **ES Appendix 9.1 FRA & Outline Surface Water Drainage Strategy [EN0110014/APP/6.3.9.1]** has been prepared in accordance with the NPPF PPG.

Local Planning Policy

- 9.1.16 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC) and South Norfolk Council (SNC) who are the host

authorities. Local planning policies which are relevant to the Water Environment and have informed the Water Environment assessment are detailed below.

- 9.1.17 The South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document (DMPD) (October 2015) Policy DM4.2 – Sustainable Drainage and water management (Ref 9-14). The policy states that sustainable drainage measures must be fully integrated into design, drainage features should make a positive contribution to amenity and biodiversity, should maximise the use of permeable surfaces, must have a neutral or positive impact on reducing surface water flooding and must not cause any deterioration in water quality.
- 9.1.18 The Scheme is located within an area that is covered by the Greater Norwich Local Plan Greater Norwich Local Plan (adopted by SNC in March 2024) (Ref 9-15). There are no specific policies that are relevant to the Water Environment.

Other Guidance

- 9.1.19 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following other guidance documents:
- Planning Inspectorate – Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on the Water Framework Directive (2024) (Ref 9-16). This non-statutory advice summarises the requirements of the WFD Regulations in relation to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) applications and on the different stages of WFD assessment required;
 - The EA’s approach to Groundwater Protection (2018 v1.2);
 - Pollution Prevention Guidelines (2014). These have been withdrawn but are still considered relevant in the absence of superseded guidance;
 - The NCC ‘LLFA Statutory Consultee for Planning Guidance Document’ (Version 7.3, April 2025) (Ref 9-17) provides guidance for the design and construction of surface water drainage systems within Norfolk;
 - The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) ‘National standards for sustainable drainage systems’ (2025) (Ref 9-18) sets out technical standards to be utilised in conjunction with the NPPF and associated PPG ‘Flood Risk and Coastal Change’;
 - Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) C752 ‘The SuDS Manual’ (2015) (Ref 9-19) covers planning, design, construction and maintenance of SuDS to assist with implementing within both existing and new developments;

- CIRIA 'Environmental Good Practice On Site' guide (5th Edition) C811 (2023) (Ref 9-20);
- Environment Agency classification on water stressed areas (2021) (Ref 9-21). This report sets out which areas in England are officially classified as water stressed under the Water Industry Act. This assessment enables water companies to understand the risk of water supply in their area and act accordingly e.g. by considering compulsory metering and enhanced water efficiency measures;
- Anglian Waters Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) 2024 (Ref 9-22). This document outlines Anglian Water's long term strategy for balancing water supply and demand (2025-2050);
- Anglian Waters Drought Plan 2022 (Ref 9-23) is a statutory document required under the Water Industry Act and outlines how Anglian Water will manage water resources during droughts (2022-2027);
- Anglian Water's approach to handling non-domestic water supply requests is set out in Anglian Water's non-domestic water requests policy (2023) (Ref 9-24);
- A review of the Environment Agency's Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS) for the Broadland Catchment (2017) (Ref 9-25). CAMs documents outline how water resources are managed in the catchment and provides guidance on where water may be available for abstraction and under what conditions this water could be available;
- The EA Guidance on Rainwater Harvesting (2019) (Ref 9-26) details when you can use harvested rainwater without a water abstraction licence and when you must apply for one. This guidance applies to England and aims to support sustainable water use without harming the environment; and
- The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges guidance sets out the methodologies for assessing drainage and water environment impacts (Ref 9-27).

10 Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage

10.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 10 Cultural Heritage [EN0110014/APP/6.1.10]**.

Legislation and Regulations

- Infrastructure Planning (Decisions) Regulations 2010 (Ref 10-1)
 - The Infrastructure Planning (Decisions) Regulations 2010 outline how decisions on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) should consider the impact of proposed projects on heritage assets and places a focus of the desirability of preserving the character, significance and setting of said heritage assets. These regulations ensure that the potential harm to designated heritage assets is an important factor in the decision-making process for major infrastructure projects.
- Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (Ref 10-2)
 - The process of Environmental Impact Assessment in the context of nationally significant projects in England is governed by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the '2017 Regulations'). These regulations apply to development which is given planning permission under Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
 - These regulations apply the amended EU directive 'on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment' (usually referred to as the 'Environmental Impact Assessment Directive') to the planning system in England.
- Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 (Ref 10-3)
 - The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act (HBAMA) (Ref 12.5) makes provision for the compilation of a register of gardens and other land (parks and gardens, and battlefields).
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (AMAAA) 1979 (Ref 10-4)
 - The AMAAA largely relates to Scheduled Monuments (SMs) and designated archaeological areas, detailing in particular what can and cannot be undertaken on archaeological grounds.

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (P(LBCA)A) 1990 (Ref 10-5)
 - The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 1990 Act) provides for the protection of listed buildings and Conservation Areas and is largely expressed in the planning process through policies in regional and local planning guidance, as outlined below. This act is the primary legislative instrument addressing the treatment of listed buildings and Conservation Areas through the planning process.
- Planning Act 2008 (Ref 10-6)
 - The Planning Act 2008 established the Infrastructure Planning Commission, a consent regime for major infrastructure projects concerning energy, transport, water, waste water and waste. Further, it made provisions about the authorisation of nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) in addition to town and country planning and the imposition of a Community Infrastructure Levy. Part 3 of the act defines the criteria for NSIPs, including the construction or extension of a generating station if '...a) It is in England; aa) it does not generate electricity from wind; b) it is not an offshore generating station, and; c) its capacity is more than 50 megawatts.
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (Ref 10-7)
 - The Hedgerow Regulations 1997, made under Section 97 of the Environment Act 1995, set out criteria that must be used in determining which hedgerows are important, and thus a material consideration in planning.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

10.1.2 National Policy Statements - National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy tests against which the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme will be considered. Listed below are the details of the elements of NPS considered relevant to the Cultural Heritage assessment.

- The Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1, 2023) (Ref 10-8) sets out the government's policy for the delivery of major energy infrastructure and, in conjunction with relevant technology-specific NPSs, forms the primary policy for Secretary of State decision making for such developments. Part 5 of EN-1 details the policies on the assessment of common impacts across the range of energy technologies, with Section 5.9, entitled 'Historic Environment', specifying the predominant policy concerning impacts of major energy infrastructure

on the historic environment, including guidance on the assessment and mitigation of these impacts. This section requires applicants to assess the significance of any heritage assets with the potential to be affected and provides advice on the means of reducing any impact, which should be considered throughout the design process.

- Paragraph 5.9.32 and 5.9.33 of EN-1 recognise that the Secretary of State should take into account the positive role that large-scale renewable projects play in the mitigation of climate change, the delivery of energy security and the urgency of meeting the net zero target, stating that this public benefit must be weighed against any loss or harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset.
- The relevant technology-specific NPS for the Scheme comprises the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)(Ref 10-9). Paragraphs 2.10.107 to 2.10.110 of EN-3 details government policy on developments for Solar Photovoltaic Generation and incorporates specific considerations in regard to cultural heritage:

'The impacts of solar PV developments on the historic environment will require expert assessment in most cases and may have effect both above and below ground.

Above ground impacts may include the effects on the setting of Listed Buildings and other designated heritage assets as well as on Historic Landscape Character.

Below ground impacts, although generally limited, may include direct impacts on archaeological deposits through ground disturbance associated with trenching, cabling, foundations, fencing, temporary haul routes etc.

Equally, solar PV developments may have a positive effect, for example archaeological assets may be protected by a solar PV farm as the site is removed from regular ploughing and shoes or low-level piling is stipulated.'

- The National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (Ref 10-10) details government policy on electricity infrastructure. With regards to cultural heritage, the document largely refers to policies set out in EN-1 and EN3 but recognises the potential impacts upon the setting of designated heritage assets from overhead cables and direct impacts from undergrounding in paragraph 2.9.25.

10.1.3 The NPSs for energy are currently undergoing review and draft policies for these have been made in 2025 (Ref 10-11)(Ref 10-12)(Ref 10-13).

10.1.4 National Planning Policy Framework - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 10-14) as revised in December 2024 sets out

national planning policies that reflect priorities of the Government for operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State's (SoS) consideration of the Scheme. Listed below provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to this chapter:

- Section 16 of the NPPF, entitled 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets.
- Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the: Delivery of sustainable development; Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment, and Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 212 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset, and that the level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- The Planning Practice Guidance (Ref 10-15) is a web-based resource which is to be used in conjunction with the NPPF. It is aimed at planning professionals and prescribes best practice within the planning sector. The relevant section is entitled 'Historic Environment'. The guidance given in this section sets out the best practice to applying government policy in the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

10.1.5 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC) and South Norfolk Council (SNC) who are the host authorities. Local planning plan policies which are relevant to Cultural Heritage and have informed the Cultural Heritage assessment are detailed below.

- The Greater Norwich Local Plan (adopted March 2024) (Ref 10-16) comprises policies to support development in Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk district councils working in partnership with Norfolk County

Council and the Broads Authority. It contains one policy of relevance to the Cultural Heritage Assessment:

POLICY 3 – ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

The Built and Historic Environment

The development strategy of the plan and the sites proposed for development reflect the area's settlement structure of the city, towns and villages, retaining the separate identities of individual settlements.

Development proposals should enhance the built and historic environment through:

- Being designed to create a distinct sense of place and enhance local character, taking account of local guidance such as conservation area appraisals and historic landscape character assessments.*
- Avoiding harm to designated and non-designated heritage assets, including their setting, having regard to their level of significance in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF and relevant policies in other Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Plans.*
- Providing a continued or new use for heritage assets whilst retaining their historic significance.*
- Undertaking a heritage impact assessment if significant impacts to a heritage asset might arise.*
- Where relevant, heritage interpretation measures should be provided to enhance the appreciation and understanding of local heritage assets.*

- The South Norfolk Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (Ref 10-17) includes the following objective:

To protect, manage and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, including key landscapes, natural resources and areas of natural habitat or nature conservation value

Other Guidance

10.1.6 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following other guidance documents.

- Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (Ref 10-18)

- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (Ref 10-19)
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets (Ref 10-20)
- Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets. Historic England Advice Note 12 (Ref 10-21)
- Advice Note 15: Commercial Renewable Energy Development and the Historic Environment (Ref 10-22)
- Norfolk County Council Standards for Developer-Led Archaeological Projects in Norfolk (Ref 10-23)
- Historic England Piling and Archaeology (Ref 10-24)
- Historic England Using Airborne LiDAR in Archaeological Survey (Ref 10-25)
- Historic England Land Contamination and Archaeology (Ref 10-26)
- Historic England Preserving Archaeological Remains (Ref 10-27)

11 Chapter 11: Transport and Access

11.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 11 Transport and Access [EN0110014/APP/6.1.11]**.

Legislation and Regulations

11.1.2 There are several key legislative and regulatory frameworks that inform the consideration of traffic and transport impacts associated with the Scheme proposals. These include, but are not limited to:

- Highways Act 1980 (Ref 11-1);
- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Ref 11-2);
- Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (Ref 11-3);
- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) (Ref 11-4);
- Traffic Management Act 2004 (Ref 11-5);
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM) (Ref 11-6);
- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, and associated Traffic Signs Manuals (Ref 11-7); and
- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), particularly standards CD109 (Ref 11-8) and CD123 (Ref 11-9).

11.1.3 These documents collectively provide the legislative and technical basis for assessing traffic and transport considerations in relation to the Scheme.

Planning Policy

National Policy Statements

11.1.4 National Policy Statements (NPS) are a suite of documents issued by the SoS for Energy Security and Net Zero, setting out the government's policy for the delivery of major energy infrastructure and represent the primary policy tests against which the application for a DCO for the Scheme will be considered pursuant to section 104 of the Planning Act 2008. Listed below are the details of the elements of the NPS considered relevant to the Transport and Access assessment.

**Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1) 2025
(Ref 11-10) Paragraph 5.14.5 states:**

'If a project is likely to have significant transport implications, the applicant's ES should include vision for transport and an assessment of potential transport impacts.'

11.1.5 Paragraph 5.14.7 states:

'Applicants should consult with National Highways and Highways Authorities as appropriate on the assessment, including any reasonable future tested scenarios and mitigation to inform the application to be submitted.'

11.1.6 Paragraph 5.14.8 states:

'The applicant should prepare a travel plan adopting a vision-led approach to identify demand management and monitoring and fallback measures that proactively mitigate transport impacts by providing details of proposed measures to improve access by active, public and shared transport to:

- *Reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal;*
- *Contribute to decarbonisation of the transport network; and*
- *Improve user travel options by offering genuine modal choice.'*

11.1.7 Paragraph 5.14.12 states that:

'Where mitigation is needed, possible demand management measures must be considered. This could include identifying opportunities to:

- *Reduce the need to travel by consolidating trips;*
- *Locate development in areas already accessible by active travel and public transport;*
- *Provide opportunities for shared mobility;*
- *Re-mode by shifting travel to a sustainable mode that is more beneficial to the network;*
- *Retime travel outside of the known peak times; and*
- *Reroute to use parts of the network that are less busy.'*

11.1.8 Paragraph 5.14.14 states that:

'Regard should always be given to the needs of freight at all stages in the construction and operation of the development including the need to provide appropriate facilities for HGV drivers as appropriate.'

11.1.9 Paragraph 5.14.15 states that:

‘The Secretary of State may attach requirements to a consent where there is likely to be substantial HGV traffic that:

- *Control numbers of HGV movements to and from the site in a specified period during its construction and possibly on the routing of such movements;*
- *Make sufficient provision for HGV parking, and associated high quality drive facilities either on the site or at dedicated facilities elsewhere, to support driver welfare, avoid ‘overspill’ parking on public roads, prolonged queuing on approach roads and uncontrolled on-street HGV parking in normal operating conditions; and*
- *Ensure satisfactory arrangements for reasonably foreseeable abnormal disruption, in consultation with network providers and the responsible police force.’*

11.1.10 Paragraph 5.14.16 states that:

‘The Secretary of State should have regard to the cost-effectiveness of demand management measures compared to new transport infrastructure, as well as the aim to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development when considering mitigation measures.’

11.1.11 Paragraph 5.14.22 states that:

‘The Secretary of State should only consider refusing development on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, or it does not show how consideration has been given to the provision of adequate active public or shared transport access and provision.’

11.1.12 In response to NPS EN-1, **ES: Appendix 11.1 Transport Assessment [EN0110014/APP/6.3.11.1]** and **Outline CTMP [EN0110014/APP/7.6]** and the **Outline OTMP [EN0110014/APP/7.7]** have been prepared to accompany the DCO Application. Specifically, the outline CTMP incorporates targeted measures to manage construction traffic demand in line with policy requirements, including re-timing deliveries and consolidating loads to minimise overall trip volumes. These actions directly support the mitigation objectives set out in the policy document.

11.1.13 National Highways (NH) and Norfolk County Council (NCC) (as highway authority) have been consulted prior to submission, as per **ES: Chapter 11 Transport and Access [EN0110014/APP/6.1.11]**.

NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) 2025 (Ref 11-11)

11.1.14 Paragraphs 2.12.23 to 2.12.28 refers to the Transport and Access impacts of projects on the PRow network, with paragraph 2.12.28 stating:

‘Applicants should set out detail on how public rights of way would be managed to ensure they are safe to use in an outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan.’

11.1.15 In accordance with this policy, **Outline PRow Plan [EN0110014/APP/7.8]**, has been prepared to accompany the DCO submission to set out how safe use of the PRow and permissive path network will be managed throughout the construction and lifetime of the Scheme.

11.1.16 Paragraphs 2.12.107 to 2.12.113 relate to assessing the Traffic and Transport impacts of renewable energy projects, notably paragraph 2.12.110 states that:

‘Applicants should assess the various potential routes to the site for delivery of materials and components (including abnormal indivisible loads) where the source of the materials is known at the time of the application, and select the route that is most appropriate.’

11.1.17 In accordance with this policy, an assessment of the routes available to access the Scheme is detailed within the **Outline CTMP [EN0110014/APP/7.6]**.

11.1.18 Paragraphs 2.10.131 to 2.10.136 of EN-3 cover the impact of construction traffic, with paragraph 2.10.131 stating:

‘In some cases, the local highway authority may request that the Secretary of State impose controls on the number of vehicle movements to and from the solar farm site in a specified period during its construction and, possibly, on the routing of such movements particularly by heavy vehicles.’

11.1.19 In addition, paragraph 2.10.133 states:

‘Where cumulative effects on the local road network or residential amenity are predicted from multiple solar farm developments, it may be appropriate for applicants for various projects to work together to ensure that the number of abnormal loads and deliveries are minimised, and the timings of deliveries are managed and coordinated to ensure that disruption to residents and other highway users is reasonably minimised.’

11.1.20 In accordance with this policy, the **Outline CTMP [EN0110014/APP/7.6]** allows for coordination with any cumulative schemes to ensure collaboration and that the cumulative effects on the Local Road Network (LRN) are minimised. This document also includes restrictions on the use of the LRN, such as prescribed routing for vehicles, a cap on the number of daily vehicles and restrictions on delivery times.

NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) 2025 (Ref 11-12)

11.1.21 Paragraph 2.9.19 states that Applicants should:

‘...make the design of access roads, perimeter fencing, earth-shaping, planting and ancillary development an integral part of the site layout and design, so as to fit in with the surroundings.’

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) (Ref 11-13)

11.1.22 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as revised in February 2025 sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the government for the operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF is not directly associated with the governance regime of the Planning Act 2008, however, has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the SoS consideration of the Scheme. Listed below provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to this chapter, and how and where they are covered in the ES.

11.1.23 Paragraph 116 states:

‘Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.’

11.1.24 Paragraph 118 states:

‘All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a vision-led transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed and monitored.’

11.1.25 In accordance with this requirement, **ES: Appendix 11.1 Transport Assessment [EN0110014/APP/6.3.11.1]** has been prepared. Initial measures to be written into the detailed Travel Plan are initially detailed within the **Outline CTMP [EN0110014/APP/7.6]**, with a detailed Travel Plan secured as part of the Final CTMP, which is to be secured through the DCO and provided prior to commencement of the Construction Phase of the Scheme.

11.1.26 The **Outline OTMP [EN0110014/APP/7.7]** is secured by way of requirement on the DCO to ensure that the operational impacts are appropriately mitigated and in accordance with the NPPF.

Emerging National Planning Policy Framework (2025 Consultation Draft)

- 11.1.27 In December 2025, the Government published a draft revised National NPPF for consultation, accompanied by draft policy text. The consultation runs from 16 December 2025 to 10 March 2026 and seeks views on proposed changes to national planning policy.
- 11.1.28 As with the adopted 2024 NPPF, the 2025 draft NPPF published for consultation does not form part of the governance regime established by the Planning Act 2008 and therefore does not apply directly to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. However, the 2025 consultation draft retains a strong emphasis on sustainable development, which provides relevant wider planning context. Accordingly, the relevant elements of the adopted 2024 NPPF remain applicable to the Scheme and would continue to apply upon adoption of the draft NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

- 11.1.29 The Scheme is located within the administrative boundaries of Norfolk County Council (NCC) and South Norfolk Council (SNC), which act as the Local Highway Authority (LHA) and the principal host authority respectively for the project. NCC is responsible for strategic matters such as highways, PRoW, and overarching environmental considerations, while SNC covers local planning, community impacts, and environmental health within the district. The relevant policies from these authorities relating to the Scheme are detailed below.

NCC Local Transport Plan 4 Strategy 2021-2036 (2022) (Ref 11-14)

- 11.1.30 NCC's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) Strategy (2021–2036) sets the overarching framework for transport planning and investment across the county. The strategy aims to deliver a connected, sustainable, and resilient transport network that supports economic growth, reduces carbon emissions, and improves accessibility for all communities. It aligns with national policy and NCC's ambition to achieve net-zero carbon by 2030, promoting modal shift towards active travel and public transport while maintaining essential road connectivity.

- 11.1.31 Policy 2 of this plan specifically relates to the Scheme and states:

'The priority for reducing emissions will be to support a shift to more sustainable modes and more efficient vehicles, including lower carbon technology and cleaner fuels; this includes the facilitation of necessary infrastructure.'

- 11.1.32 **ES: Chapter 11 Transport and Access [EN0110014/APP/6.1.11].** demonstrates that the transport and access impacts associated with the Construction Phase of the Scheme have been carefully assessed and will be managed to align with NCC's aims outlined in LTP4. Measures to minimise vehicle movements, encourage efficient routing, and reduce emissions during construction will ensure that temporary impacts do not conflict with

the overarching goal of promoting sustainability and carbon reduction. Detail on specific mitigation strategies is provided in the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) [EN0110014/APP/7.6]**.

South Norfolk Council Strategic Plan (2024-2028) (Ref 11-15)

11.1.33 Although the SNC Strategic Plan (2024–2028) does not set out detailed transport policies in the manner of a Local Plan, it provides clear guidance on the future direction of transport within the district. The guiding principles for transport within the Strategic Plan are raised in the plan’s priorities and are as follows:

11.1.34 Priority 2 – Growing a prosperous economy, states that:

‘The transport network requires improvement in many areas within the district and access to public transport is limited in more rural and remote areas. We will:

- *‘...work with partners to address key infrastructure constraints in relation to energy, transport, housing, flood risk and digital connectivity’; and*
- *‘...make it easier for rural businesses by helping enterprises that are in more secluded areas.’*

11.1.35 Priority 1 – Enhancing Our Environment, states that:

‘We will provide new and enhanced open spaces which are more accessible to the widest possible range of people.’

11.1.36 In response to this policy framework, the DCO Application includes the **Outline PRow Plan [EN0110014/APP/7.8]**, which details how access to open spaces will be maintained and enhanced throughout the delivery of the Scheme. This DCO Application is also supported by an **Outline OTMP [EN0110014/APP/7.7]** which sets out the procedures for managing site operations, ensuring safety, minimising disruption, and implementing mitigation measures to protect local communities and the surrounding environment.

Other Guidance

11.1.37 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following other guidance documents.

11.1.38 Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Transport and Access, published in 2023 by the IEMA (the IEMA EATM Guidelines) (Ref 11-16), have been considered and are set out in **ES: Chapter 8 Ecology and Biodiversity [EN0110014/APP/6.1.8]**. IEMA has since transitioned to the Institute of Sustainability and Impact Professionals (ISIP), but the referenced guidelines remain widely recognised and applicable.

12 Chapter 12 Noise

- 12.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 12 Noise [EN0110014/APP/6.1.12]**.

Legislation

- 12.1.2 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Ref 12-1) defines the powers for local authorities to investigate and control statutory nuisance from noise. Local authorities also have powers under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 Part III (Ref 12-2) to control noise and vibration from construction activities. Notwithstanding these powers, the aim of the planning system is to minimise and control (where required) noise and vibration levels.

National Planning Policy

- 12.1.3 The Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1) (Ref 12-3) recognises that noise and vibration from energy development can have impacts on the quality of human life as well as on wildlife in some cases. This document outlines general principles for the control and management of these impacts and relevant factors and standards to consider but do not provide specific guidance.
- 12.1.4 The NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (Ref 12-4) specifically considers solar photovoltaic generation and recognises that the Government is supportive of solar that is co-located with energy storage to maximise the efficiency of land use. It also includes construction (including traffic and transport noise and vibration) as a specific factor to consider in assessments.
- 12.1.5 The NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (Ref 12-5) sets out specific considerations which apply to electricity network infrastructure. NPS EN 5 notes the potential for high voltage transmission lines in certain conditions, substation equipment such as transformers, and other voltage regulation equipment to produce noise.
- 12.1.6 The Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) (Ref 12-9) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 12-10) include general planning guidance on noise. They introduce the principles of adverse noise effects (which should be mitigated and reduced to a minimum) and significant adverse noise effects (which should be avoided). The NPPF also notes that tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise, and areas which are prized for their recreational and amenity value, should be identified and protected.

Planning Policy Guidance

- 12.1.7 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on noise (Ref 12-11) provides more detailed information on the relevance of noise to the planning process and NSIP on defining effect thresholds.

Local Planning Policy

Greater Norwich Local Plan

- 12.1.8 The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) provides a strategic framework for sustainable development across Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk. It emphasises the importance of environmental protection, including the management of noise to safeguard community well-being.

- 12.1.9 Policy 3: Environmental Protection and Enhancement of the GNLP underscores the necessity of mitigating environmental impacts, stating that development proposals must:

‘Ensure that development does not result in unacceptable levels of pollution, including noise, and that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented to protect human health and the environment.’

- 12.1.10 This policy aligns with the GNLP's broader objective to promote sustainable communities, as outlined in Policy 2: Sustainable Communities, which advocates for:

‘The creation of safe, healthy, and inclusive communities by ensuring that development is designed to minimise exposure to environmental hazards, including noise pollution.’

- 12.1.11 Furthermore, the GNLP recognises the need for site-specific assessments to address potential noise impacts.

- 12.1.12 These policies collectively ensure that noise considerations are integral to the planning process, promoting developments that contribute positively to the quality of life for residents while protecting the environmental integrity of the Greater Norwich area.

Guidance

British Standard 4142:2014 +A1:2019

- 12.1.13 BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound (Ref 12-12) describes methods for rating and assessing sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature. The methods described in this standard use outdoor sound levels to assess the likely effects of sound on people who might be inside or outside a dwelling, or premises used for residential purposes, where sound may be experienced.

- 12.1.14 The standard is used to determine the rating levels for sources of sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature and the ambient, background and residual sound levels at outdoor locations. These levels could be used for the purposes of investigating complaints; assessing sound from proposed, new, modified or additional source(s) of sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature; and assessing sound at proposed new dwellings or existing premises used for residential purposes.
- 12.1.15 The procedure contained in BS 4142 assesses the significance of sound which depends upon the margin by which the rating level of the specific sound sources exceeds the background sound level and the context in which the sound occurs/will occur. A BS 4142 assessment is reliant on measuring relevant background sound levels.
- 12.1.16 An initial estimate of the impact of the specific sound is obtained by subtracting the measured background sound level from the rating level and considering the following:
- Typically, the greater this difference, the greater the magnitude of the impact;
 - A difference of around +10 dB or more is likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact, depending on the context;
 - A difference of around +5 dB is likely to be an indication of an adverse impact, depending on the context; and
 - The lower the rating level is relative to the measured background sound level, the less likely it is that the specific sound source will have an adverse impact or a significant adverse impact. Where the rating level does not exceed the background sound level, this is an indication of the specific sound source having a low impact, depending on the context.

British Standard 8233: 2014

- 12.1.17 BS 8233:2014 Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Building (Ref 12-13) in relation to the Scheme, sets out desirable guideline values in habitable rooms for different types of buildings.
- 12.1.18 Relevant desirable internal ambient noise levels for non-domestic buildings are presented in **Table 12.1**.

Table 12.1: BS 8233 Typical Noise Levels in Non-domestic Buildings

Activity	Location	Design Range dB $L_{Aeq,T}$
Study and work requiring concentration	Executive Office	35-40
Listening	Place of Worship	30-35

BB93 – Acoustic Design of Schools: Performance Standards

12.1.19 BB93 – Acoustic Design of Schools: Performance Standards (Ref 12-14) sets out desirable guideline values in habitable rooms for schools and nurseries. The desirable internal ambient noise levels for schools are presented in **Table 12.2**

Table 12.2: BB93 Indoor Ambient Noise Levels for Schools

Location	Design Criteria dB $L_{Aeq,T}$
Nursery School Rooms (New Builds)	35 + 5dB with windows open

World Health Organization, Guidelines for Community Noise

12.1.20 The World Health Organization (WHO) ‘Guidelines for Community Noise’ (Ref 12-15) details guidance on suitable external sound levels around residential properties.

12.1.21 The guidelines suggest that daytime sound levels of above 50 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$ are of ‘moderate annoyance’ in the community with daytime sound levels above 55 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$ of ‘serious annoyance’.

12.1.22 The above levels are in-line with guidance detailed in BS 8233:2014 and ProPG Planning and Noise (Ref 12-16).

NANR45 - Procedure for the Assessment of Low Frequency Noise Complaints

12.1.23 The objective of NANR45 revision 1: Procedure for the assessment of low frequency noise complaints (Ref 12-17) is to assist Environmental Health practitioners in handling complaints relating to low frequency noise (LFN), excluding LFN relating to traffic and entertainment sources.

12.1.24 The NAN45 details a methodology for assessing complaints which refers to third octave band criteria between 10 Hz and 160 Hz. At frequencies below 31.5 Hz the criteria are based on the average threshold of audibility for steady sounds. The methodology compares the measured LFN at the location of the complainant with the third octave band criteria between 10 Hz and 160 Hz. Where the measured LFN exceeds the criteria, then this suggests that there may be an actionable complaint. The reference values are detailed in **Table 122.3**.

Table 122.3: LFN Criteria

Low Frequency Noise Reference Criterion ($L_{eq,T}$) at Third Octave Band Centre Frequency (Hz)												
10	12.5	16	20	25	31.5	40	50	63	80	100	125	160
92	87	83	74	64	56	49	43	42	40	38	36	34

12.1.25 The procedure detailed in NANR45 is intended to assist in the evaluation of existing problems and is not intended as a means of predicting when disturbance might occur. However, in the absence of industry standard guidance with respect to LFN, it is considered that if the assessed sound falls below the criteria curve, this is a positive indication that the assessed sound is unlikely to cause LFN complaints.

[BS ISO 9613-2:2024](#)

12.1.26 BS ISO 9613-2:2024 Attenuation of Sound During Propagation Outdoors Part 2: General method of calculation (Ref 12-18) specifies an engineering method for calculating the attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors to predict the levels of environmental sound at a distance from a variety of sources. This technical standard provides calculations for downwind propagation and considers geometrical divergence, atmospheric absorption, ground effect, reflection effects, reflections from surfaces and screening by obstacles.

[British Standard 7445:2003](#)

12.1.27 BS 7445-1:2003 Description and Measurement of Environmental Noise – Part 1: Guide to Quantities and Procedures (Ref 12-19) describes methods and procedures for measuring noise from all sources which contribute to the total noise climate of a community environment, individually and in combination. The results are expressed as equivalent continuous A-weighted sound pressure levels, $L_{Aeq,T}$.

12.1.28 BS 7445-1:2003 states that sound level meters that are used should conform to Class 1 (or Class 2 as a minimum) as described in BS EN 61672-1:2013 (Ref 12-20). They should be calibrated according to the instructions of the manufacturer and field calibration should be undertaken at least before and after each series of measurements.

[British Standard 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites Part 1 Noise](#)

12.1.29 BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 (Ref 12-21) gives recommendations for basic methods of noise control relating to construction sites, including sites where demolition, remediation, ground treatment or related civil engineering works are being carried out, and open sites, where work activities/operations generate significant noise levels, including industry-specific guidance.

[British Standard 5228-2:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites Part 2 Vibration](#)

12.1.30 5228-2:2009+A1:2014 (Ref 12-22) provides advice on the human response to demolition and construction vibration. BS 5228-2 suggests that, for demolition and construction activities, it is considered appropriate to provide

guidance in terms of the peak particle velocity (PPV) as measured outside the building.

Calculation of Road Traffic Noise 1988

12.1.31 The Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN) (Department for Transport and Welsh Office, 1988) (Ref 12-23) describes the standard procedures for the measurement and calculation of traffic noise. It includes consideration of a number of factors including vehicle class, speed, road surface, distance attenuation and barrier attenuation.

12.1.32 Noise levels are measured or predicted in terms of the $L_{A10,1\text{hour}}$ or $L_{A10,18\text{hour}}$. The $L_{A10,18\text{hour}}$ is the arithmetic average of the measured or calculated $L_{A10,1\text{hour}}$ levels for each one-hour period between 06:00 hours and 00:00 hours.

DEFRA 'Method for Converting the UK Traffic Noise Index $L_{A10,18\text{hr}}$ to EU Noise Indices for Noise Mapping'

12.1.33 The 'Method for Converting the UK Road Traffic Index $L_{A10,18\text{hour}}$ to the EU Noise Indices For Road Noise Mapping' (Ref 12-24) can be used to convert $L_{A10,18\text{hour}}$ (06:00 – 00:00 hours) sound levels from vehicular movements on a road to daytime, evening and night-time sound levels ($L_{Aeq,T}$).

Design Manual for Road and Bridges (2020) – Design Manual for Road and Bridges LA 111 Traffic Noise and Vibration

12.1.34 The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Design Manual for Road and Bridges LA 111 Traffic Noise and Vibration (Standards for Highways 2020) (Ref 12-25) is considered to be the regulatory standard for the design of a new road or improvements to an existing road. LA 111 provides guidance on the environmental assessment of noise and vibration emissions and includes likely significant effects from:

- Construction noise;
- Construction vibration; and
- Operational noise.

13 Air Quality

13.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 13 Air Quality [EN0110014/APP/6.1.13]**.

Legislation and Regulations

13.1.2 The key legislation for the assessment includes:

- Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 (AQR) (Ref 13-1) and subsequent amendment in 2002 (Ref 13-2) – ambient air quality standards and objectives (AQOs) are given statutory backing through the AQR.
- Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 (AQSR) (Ref 13-3) and subsequent amendments - transpose the requirements of the European Union (EU) Directive on ambient air quality (2008/50/EC) (Ref 13-4) into English law including air quality limit and target values.
- The Air Quality (Amendment of Domestic Regulations) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (Ref 13-5) - amend the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 to reflect the fact that the UK has left the EU.
- The Environment (Miscellaneous Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 (Ref 13-6) – amend the PM2.5 limit value from 25 µg/m³ from the AQSR to 20 µg/m³ in accordance with EU Directive 2008/50/EC (Ref 13-4).
- The Environment Act 1995 (Ref 13-7) – Part IV introduced a system of Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) which requires local authorities to regularly and systematically review and assess air quality within their boundary. The Act also required the Government to prepare an Air Quality Strategy (AQS).
- The Air Quality Strategy 2007 (Ref 13-8) - establishes the policy framework for ambient air quality management and assessment in the UK. The primary objective of the AQS is to ensure that everyone can enjoy a level of ambient air quality which poses no significant risk to health or quality of life. The Air Quality Strategy sets out the National Air Quality Objectives (AQOs) and Government policy on achieving these.
- The Environment Act 2021 (Ref 13-9) – provides a legal framework for environmental governance in the UK and measures for the improvement of the environment including air quality. The Environment Act required an updated AQS and commits to setting new targets for PM2.5.

- The Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023 (Ref 13-10) – set out targets for PM2.5 including an Annual Mean Concentration Target (AMCT) and Population Exposure Reduction Target (PERT) to be met by 2040.
- The Non-Road Mobile Machinery (Type-Approval and Emission of Gaseous and Particulate Pollutants) Regulations 2018 and The Road Vehicles and Non-Road Mobile Machinery (Type Approval) (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2022 (Ref 13-11) - set out gaseous and particulate pollutant emission limits and type-approval for internal combustion engines for NRMM and transposes the requirements of EU Directive 2016/1628.
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Ref 13-12) – Part III defines generation of dust and deposits which are prejudicial to health or a nuisance as a Statutory Nuisance.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

- 13.1.3 National Policy Statements - National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy tests against which the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme will be considered. Listed below are the details of the elements of NPS considered relevant to the air quality assessment.
- The latest version of the Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1), dated December 2025, came into force on 6th January 2026 (Ref 13-13). The relevant section to this Chapter is Section 5.2 Air Quality and Emissions.
 - NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure EN-3, dated December 2025 (Ref 13-14). Paragraphs 2.7.41– 2.7.44 set out the requirements of an ES in relation to air quality including consideration of cumulative effects from construction, operation and vehicle movements.
 - National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks EN-5, dated December 2025, with updated drafts released in April 2025 (Ref 13-15). EN-5 does not specifically reference air quality.
- 13.1.4 National Planning Policy Framework - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 13-16) as revised in December 2024 (as subsequently amended in February 2025) sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the Government for operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF

has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State's (SoS) consideration of the Scheme.

13.1.5 Listed below are the details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to this Chapter, and how and where they are covered in the ES.

- NPPF Section 15 paragraph 187 states *'planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: [...] preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land stability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality [...]'*. An assessment of air quality impacts and effects of the Scheme has been undertaken and is presented in **ES: Chapter 13 Air Quality [EN0110014/APP/6.1.13] Section 13.8**. Mitigation measures are summarised in **ES: Chapter 13 Air Quality [EN0110014/APP/6.1.13] Section 13.7** and **ES: Chapter 13 Air Quality [EN0110014/APP/6.1.13] Section 13.9**.
- NPPF Section 15 paragraph 199 states *'planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.'* The assessment undertaken in **ES: Chapter 13 Air Quality [EN0110014/APP/6.1.13] Section 13.8** takes into account national objectives for air pollutants, cumulative impacts and the presence of any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Mitigation measures are summarised in **ES: Chapter 13 Air Quality [EN0110014/APP/6.1.13] Section 13.7** and **ES: Chapter 13 Air Quality [EN0110014/APP/6.1.13] Section 13.9**.

National Planning Practice Guidance

13.1.6 The air quality section of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (Ref 13-17), last updated in 2019, includes guidance on the contents of an air quality assessment and how effects on air quality can be mitigated. The assessment presented in **ES: Chapter 13 Air Quality [EN0110014/APP/6.1.13] Section 13.8** has been undertaken in accordance

with the NPPG which also contains recommendations for air quality assessments undertaken for compliance with NPPF policies.

Local Planning Policy

13.1.7 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of NCC and SNC who are the host authorities. Local planning policies which are relevant to air quality and have informed the air quality assessment are detailed below.

- The South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document (Ref 13-18), adopted in October 2015, contains the following policies which relate to air quality:
 - Policy DM 3.14 'Pollution, health and safety'. The Policy sets out the requirements for development in terms of minimising emissions and ensuring that there are no unacceptable impacts on air quality.
 - Policy DM 3.13 'Amenity, noise and quality of life' states *'Development should ensure a reasonable standard of amenity reflecting the character of the local area. In all cases particular regard will be paid to avoiding: [...] introduction of incompatible neighbouring uses in terms of noise, odour, vibration, air, dusts [...].'*
 - Policy DM3.14 'Renewable Energy' requires proposals for energy generating development to consider effects on amenities and living conditions of nearby residents resulting from dust and odour.
- The Scheme is located within an area that is covered by the Greater Norwich Local Plan Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), adopted by SNC in March 2024 (Ref 13-19). Through Policy 2 'Sustainable Communities', the GNLP requires developments proposals to avoid risks of unacceptable levels of air pollution.

Other Guidance

13.1.8 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following other guidance documents.

DEFRA 'Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance (LAQM.TG(22))'

13.1.9 DEFRA LAQM.TG (22) was published for use by local authorities in their LAQM review and assessment work (Ref 13-20). The document provides key guidance on aspects of air quality assessment, including screening, use of monitoring data, and use of background data that are applicable to all air quality assessments.

EPUK & IAQM 'Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality'

13.1.10 EPUK and the IAQM have together published guidance to help ensure that air quality is properly accounted for in the development control process (Ref 13-21). It clarifies when an air quality assessment should be undertaken, what it should contain, and how impacts should be described and assessed including guidelines for assessing the significance of impacts.

IAQM 'Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction'

13.1.11 Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction has been published by the IAQM (Ref 13-22). The guidance provides a series of matrices to determine the risk magnitude of potential dust sources associated with construction activities in order to identify appropriate mitigation measures that are defined within further IAQM guidance.

IAQM 'Guide to the Assessment of Air Quality Impacts on Designated Nature Conservation Sites'

13.1.12 The IAQM has published guidance on the assessment of air quality impacts on designated nature conservation sites (Ref 13-23) which adopts a similar procedure to that detailed in Natural England guidance on the assessment of road traffic emissions (Ref 13-24) and identifies that exhaust pipe emission of ammonia (NH₃) is an additional relevant pollutant when assessing nitrogen deposition to sensitive ecological features.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee 'Guidance on Decision-making Thresholds for Air Pollution'

13.1.13 The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) has published guidance (Ref 13-25) on the decision-making thresholds (DMTs) to help inform the assessment of the impacts of air quality on designated nature conservation sites. These DMTs are intended to be applied to individual sources to identify which are below a relevant threshold can properly be ignored on the basis that their combined effect will not undermine the achievement of the conservation objectives or make a meaningful contribution to a significant effect.

Natural England 'Air Pollution and Development: Advice for Local Authorities' Guidance

13.1.14 Natural England has produced 'standing advice' for local authorities (Ref 13-26) in relation to air quality impacts on protected ecological sites. It provides steps on screening out development proposals which are unlikely to have an effect on air quality at protected sites, with reference to the JNCC guidance for in-combination impacts. It also provides guidance on undertaking detailed air quality assessments of air quality impacts on protected sites including recommended information sources and tools.

Environmental Improvement Plan

13.1.15 The revised Environmental Improvement Plan (Ref 13-27) sets out Government strategy to restore nature and improve environmental quality and security. It sets out a number of measurable commitments in relation to environmental improvements including two interim targets for PM_{2.5} for concentrations and exposure. The interim PM_{2.5} targets included in the Plan are:

- An annual mean concentrations target of 10 µg/m³ by December 2030.
- A population exposure reduction target of 30% compared to 2018 to be achieved by December 2030.

DEFRA PM_{2.5} Targets: Interim Planning Guidance

13.1.16 DEFRA is developing guidance to ensure that the PM_{2.5} targets are appropriately considered in planning applications and planning decisions. Interim guidance (Ref 13-28) has been published, requiring applicants to evidence that key sources of air pollution have been identified within their schemes and appropriate action taken to minimise exposure to and emissions of PM_{2.5} as far as reasonably practicable.

14 Chapter 14: Socio Economics

- 14.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 14 Socio Economics [EN0110014/APP/6.1.14]**

Legislation and Regulations

- 14.1.2 The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (Ref 14-1) (the 'EIA Regulations') set out the statutory requirements for EIA of NSIPs. The Regulations ensure that likely significant effects of a proposed development on the environment, including socio-economic effects, are appropriately identified, described, and assessed. The EIA process requires that the findings of these assessments are presented within this Environmental Statement to inform the decision-making process under the Planning Act.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

- 14.1.3 National Policy Statements - National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy tests against which the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme has been considered pursuant to section 104 of the Planning Act 2008. Listed below are the details of the elements of NPS considered relevant to the Socio-Economic assessment.
- Overarching NPS for Energy (EN-1) (2025) (Ref 14-2):
 - Section 3.3 highlights the need to ensure a secure, reliable, and affordable supply of energy to support the UK's population and businesses. It recognises that energy infrastructure is critical to economic growth, productivity, and the transition to net zero;
 - Section 5.13 outlines the principles for assessing socio-economic impacts, stating that the assessment should consider direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on employment, skills, tourism and local services. It also notes that decision-makers should give appropriate weight to the socio-economic benefits of proposed energy infrastructure, including job creation and wider economic opportunities.

- NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (2025) (Ref 14-3):
 - Paragraph 2.10.61 states that applicants should set out where there may be socio-economic benefits in retaining infrastructure after the operational life; and
 - Paragraph 2.6.2 states that where flexibility is sought in the consent, the likely worst-case social and economic effects of the Scheme should be assessed.

14.1.4 National Planning Policy Framework - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 14-4) as revised in December 2024 sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the Government for operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State's (SoS) consideration of the Scheme. Listed below provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to this chapter, and how and where they are covered in the ES.

- NPPF - Chapter 6 focuses on building a strong and competitive economy, stating that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach should allow for each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future
- NPPF - Chapter 8 focusses on promoting healthy and safe communities, highlighting the role of the planning system in creating places that promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and support healthy lifestyles. It encourages developments that contribute to community cohesion and well-being, including opportunities for employment, and the provision of social infrastructure

Local Planning Policy

14.1.5 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC) and South Norfolk Council (SNC) who are the host authorities. Local planning plan policies which are relevant to Socio-Economics and have informed the Socio-Economic assessment are detailed below.

Better Together, for Norfolk. Norfolk County Council Strategy (2021-2025) (Ref 14-5)

14.1.6 This document outlines the strategic objectives being prioritised for the 2021–2025 period. These objectives include creating a vibrant and sustainable economy, providing better opportunities for children and young people, fostering healthy, fulfilling, and independent lives, building strong,

engaged, and inclusive communities, and promoting a greener, more resilient future. The NCC's vision is for the County to be a place where everyone can start life well, live well, and age well, ensuring that no one is left behind. The aim is to cultivate a vibrant, entrepreneurial, and sustainable economy, supported by the right jobs, skills, training, and infrastructure. Additionally, communities should feel safe, healthy, empowered, and connected, with their unique characteristics respected and preserved.

Local Growth Plan: Norfolk Economic Strategy 2024-2029 (2025) (Ref 14-6)

- 14.1.7 This strategy acts as NCC's Local Growth Plan, identifying local priorities to improve productivity, drive growth and improved standards of living and the key role that Norfolk can play in the Government's new Modern Industrial Strategy which identifies clean energy as one of the eight growth-driving sectors identified and prioritised by the government. The strategy identifies Norfolk's strengths in clean energy production that will support the UK's transition to Net Zero through renewable energy, whilst including Norfolk's communities and businesses in the journey. The strategy seeks to ensure that local people benefit from jobs and new skills created by nationally significant infrastructure projects to maintain a lasting legacy for the local economy.

Greater Norwich Local Plan (Adopted in 2024) (Ref 14-7)

- 14.1.8 Both Broadland District and South Norfolk Councils have worked with Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council to prepare the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP). The GNLP plans for the housing and job needs of the area to 2038 and builds on the long-established joint working arrangement for Greater Norwich. It includes strategic policies to guide future development and plans to protect the environment. It looks to ensure that delivery of development is done in a way which promotes sustainability and the effective functioning of the whole area.
- 14.1.9 The GNLP aims to stimulate the economy and create a strong, enterprising, and productive economy built on Greater Norwich's strengths in knowledge-intensive sectors. It prioritises clean growth and innovation in areas such as digital creative industries, health and life sciences, biotechnology, and advanced manufacturing. Strategic employment sites around Norwich will deliver most of the new jobs, supported by improved transport links and infrastructure.
- 14.1.10 A key goal is to generate significant employment growth, particularly in high-value sectors, while ensuring accessible jobs across urban and rural areas. The GNLP also focuses on developing a highly skilled workforce through strong partnerships with local universities and colleges, fostering research expertise and innovation. Investment in new technologies, broadband, and mobile infrastructure will enable flexible working, support small businesses, and improve connectivity.

14.1.11 Overall, the GNLP seeks to drive sustainable economic growth, attract investment, and position Greater Norwich as a national and international leader in tackling global challenges related to energy, environment, life sciences, and climate change, contributing to the transition to a post-carbon economy.

[South Norfolk Council's Strategic Plan 2024-2028 \(Ref 14-8\)](#)

14.1.12 The vision and priorities of the Plan is to build a future where the community thrives, individuals are inspired, and the quality of life is continuously enhanced. The Plan prioritises:

- Enhancing the environment; build a cleaner and more sustainable future
- Growing a prosperous economy; creating opportunities for residents
- Enriching the Community; build strong communities
- Moving with the times; deliver services that are innovative, efficient, and easy to use

14.1.13 The Plan's overarching objective is to give businesses across South Norfolk the confidence to invest and grow, creating opportunities for residents and improving quality of life in an outstanding environment. It envisions a dynamic local economy that attracts investment, fosters innovation, and generates jobs, supporting businesses from startups to established enterprises for long-term prosperity.

Other Guidance

14.1.14 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following additional guidance documents.

- The Socio-Economic Effects of NSIPs (2025) (Ref 14-9) - sets out a methodology for the assessment of the skills, workforce and supply chain requirements for major infrastructure projects.
- The Additionality Guide (2014) (Ref 14-10) – provides guidance on how to assess the additional impact or additionality of local economic growth interventions.
- The Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government (2022) (Ref 14-11) – provides guidance on how to appraise projects and clarify the social or public – welfare costs, benefits and trade-offs.

15 Chapter 15: Soils and Agricultural Land

- 15.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 15 Soils and Agricultural Land [EN0110014/APP/6.1.15]**

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

- 15.1.2 The National Policy Statements (NPS) are a suite of documents issued by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, setting out the government's policy for delivery of major energy infrastructure and represent the primary policy tests against which this DCO Application for the Scheme will be considered under section 104 of the Planning Act 2008. Listed below are the details of the elements of the NPS considered relevant to the Soils and Agricultural Land assessment.
- 15.1.3 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1) (Ref 15-1). Paragraph 5.11.3 notes that undeveloped greenfield land may need to be used for energy infrastructure. Paragraph 5.11.12 advises that the use of BMV land should be minimised, with a preference for the use of poorer quality land. Paragraph 5.1.13 advises that applicants should seek to minimise impacts on soil health and promote soil quality through mitigation. This is addressed in this chapter of the ES. BMV is defined in paragraph 5.11.12 as land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the ALC. Paragraph 5.11.14 encourages the use of soil management plans, and an outline SMP accompanies this application. Paragraph 5.11.23 advises on mitigating impacts.
- 15.1.4 Paragraph 5.11.34 advises that the Secretary of State should ensure that schemes are not sited on BMV agricultural land without justification. If BMV land is involved, the economic and other benefits should be taken into account and areas of poorer quality land used in preference.
- 15.1.5 The National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (NPS EN-3) (Ref 15-2) Section 2.10 'Solar Photovoltaic Generation' sets out, at paragraph 2.10.21, that while land type should not be a predominating factor in determining the suitability of the site's location for renewable energy development, where the use of agricultural land has been shown to be necessary, poorer quality land should be preferred to higher quality land, avoiding BMV agricultural land where possible. Further advice is provided as follows:
- Biodiversity relative to intensive agricultural use (paragraph 2.10.81): noting that solar farms have the potential to increase the biodiversity

value of a site, especially if the land was previously intensively managed. This is addressed in **ES Chapter 8: Ecology and Biodiversity [EN0110014/APP/6.1.8]**;

- Soil handling (paragraph 2.10.73), mitigation and soil preservation (paragraph 2.10.119): cross-referencing Defra's Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable use of Soils (2009) (Ref 15-3) and advising on mitigation measures to minimise soil carbon loss and maximise soil biodiversity. This is addressed in this Chapter and have be secured in the **Outline SRMP [EN0110014/APP/7.9]**.; and
 - Paragraph 2.10.137 advises that the SoS should take into account the economic and other benefits of BMV agricultural land. The SoS should ensure that the Applicant has put forward appropriate mitigation measures to minimise the impacts on soils or soil resources.
- 15.1.6 The National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (NPS EN-5) (Ref 15-4) (paragraph 2.9.26) requires a commitment to mitigate the potential effects of undergrounding works, requiring handling of soils, backfilling and return to the underlying ALC grade.
- 15.1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 15-5) December 2024 sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the government for the operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered both important and relevant to the SoS's consideration of the Scheme. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out in paragraph 187(b) that the economic and other benefits of BMV agricultural land should be recognised in planning decisions and in the context of plan making advises that poorer quality land should be used in preference.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 15.1.8 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (Ref 15-6) (the Planning Practice Guidance suite from 2015, in the category on '*Renewable and Low-carbon energy*') advises (at Reference ID: 5-013-20150327) that factors a local planning authority will need to consider will include whether the proposed use of agricultural land has been shown to be necessary and poorer quality land has been used in preference, and the proposed use allows for continued agricultural use. This guidance is now ten years old. As set out in page 56 of the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (Ref 15-7), this guidance was due to be updated in 2025 to provide clarity and updates, but at the time of writing no update has been provided.

Local Planning Policy

15.1.9 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC) and South Norfolk Council (SNC). SNC is the host authority. Local planning plan policies which are relevant to Soils and Agricultural Land and have informed the assessment are detailed below.

- Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) (2024) Policy 2 makes no specific reference to agricultural land resources, or the use of agricultural land. In respect of renewable energy the policy states:

'Proposals for free standing decentralised, renewable and/or low carbon energy networks, except for wind energy schemes, will be supported subject to the acceptability of wider impacts'.

- Policy 3 also makes no reference to agricultural land, either the resource or its use. The pre-amble text at 194 notes that *'securing measurable gains for biodiversity is a national policy requirement and this is reflected in this policy'*. In respect of agricultural land, however, there is no specific reference to agricultural land resources
- South Norfolk Development Management Policies DPD policy DM4.4 a) sets out that natural environmental assets are identified and will be protected from any significant harmful impact arising from new development. Supporting text at paragraph 4.27 identifies that this includes BMV agricultural land.

Other Guidance

15.1.10 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following other guidance documents.

- Defra (2009) Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites (Ref 15-3);
- Natural England's Technical Information Note TIN049 'Protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land' (Ref 15-8);
- Defra 2025 'ALC of England and Wales: Guidelines for grading the quality of agricultural land' (Ref 15-9);
- Institute of Quarrying (2021) 'Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils' (Ref 15-10);
- Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (2022) 'A New Perspective on Land and Soil in Environmental Impact Assessment (Ref 15-11);

- British Society of Soil Science (2022) 'Benefitting from Soil Management in Development and Construction' (Ref 15-12).
- Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (2025) 'Solar PV on Agricultural Land' (Ref 15-13).

16 Chapter 16: Ground Conditions

- 16.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 16 Ground Conditions [EN0110014/APP/6.1.16]**

Legislation and Regulations

- **Environmental Protection Act (1990)**. Legislation on contaminated land is principally contained in Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990 (Ref 16-1) (which was inserted into the 1990 Act by section 57 of the Environment Act 1995) and as amended by section 86 of the Water Act 2003.
- The Statutory Guidance (Ref 16-2) that accompanies the legislation provides a definition of what constitutes 'contaminated land' and sets out the responsibilities of the LPA and the EA in the identification and management of contaminated land. The regulations also include a definition of 'risk', where a risk is said to be a combination of '(a) the likelihood that harm, or pollution of water, will occur as a result of contaminants in, on or under the land; and (b) the scale and seriousness of such harm or pollution if it did occur'.
- **Water Resources Act (1991)**. The Water Resources Act (Ref 16-3) aims to maintain and improve the quality of Controlled Waters (as defined in Part 3 of the Act). Part II of the Act covers the licencing of surface water and groundwater abstractions.
- **The Contaminated Land (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended by the Contaminated Land (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012)**. The Contaminated Land (England) Regulations 2006 (Ref 16-4) provide further information on the assessment of contaminated land, specifically in relation to land required to be designated as a 'special site' as defined by these regulations.
- **The Groundwater (England and Wales) Regulations (2009)**. The Groundwater (England and Wales) Regulations (Ref 16-5) cover potential groundwater contamination that could eventuate from spillages or disturbance of contaminated ground. As identified in **Appendix 16.1: Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment [EN0110014/APP/6.3.16.1]**, sources of potential contamination have been identified within the Order Limits, and the construction of the Scheme has the potential to create pollution risks during construction.
- **Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (2015)**. The Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation)

Regulations 2015 (Ref 16-6) aim to prevent new land contamination that will damage water or health. These regulations also include enforcement procedures, including criminal sanctions, for breaches of the regulations.

- **Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations (2016).** The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations (Ref 16-7) cover the licencing of surface waters and groundwater abstractions and protect water resources through Source Protection Zones (SPZs).
- **The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (2017).** The Water Framework Directive (WFD) Regulations (Ref 16-8) establish a framework for the protection of surface waters and groundwater and seeks to prevent the deterioration of WFD water bodies.
- **The Environment Act 2021.** The Environment Act 2021 (Ref 16-9) amends and adjusts various other pieces of legislation with the intention to protect and conserve the natural environment and, in particular relevance to this chapter, groundwater quality.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

16.1.2 National Policy Statements - National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy tests against which the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme has been considered pursuant to section 104 of the Planning Act 2008. Listed below are the details of the elements of NPS considered relevant to the assessment of Ground Conditions.

- Overarching NPS EN-1 (Ref 16-10)
 - Paragraph 5.4.20 states *‘The applicant should show how the project has taken advantage of opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geological conservation interests’* and paragraph 5.4.43 states *‘As a general principle, and subject to the specific policies below, development should, in line with the mitigation hierarchy, aim to avoid significant harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests, including through consideration of reasonable alternatives [...] Where significant harm cannot be avoided, impacts should be mitigated and as a last resort, appropriate compensation measures should be sought’*. Sites designated for their geological importance are identified in Section 16.6 and the potential effects are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter.
 - Paragraph 5.11.5 states *‘Where pre-existing land contamination is being considered within a development the objective is to ensure that the Site is suitable for its intended use. Risks would require consideration in accordance with the contaminated land statutory*

guidance as a minimum'. Paragraph 5.11.8 of NPS EN-1 states *'For developments on previously developed land, the applicant should ensure that they have considered the risk posed by land contamination and how it is proposed to address this'*. Paragraph 5.11.17 states *'Applicants should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination'* and paragraph 5.11.18 states *'For developments on previously developed land, applicants should ensure that they have considered the risk posed by land contamination, and where contamination is present, applicants should consider opportunities for remediation where possible. It is important to do this as early as possible as part of engagement with the relevant bodies before the official pre-application stage'*. A Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment and a Preliminary Land Stability Risk Assessment are presented within **Appendix 16.1: Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment [EN0110014/APP/6.3.16.1]** and the potential effects are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter.

- Paragraph 5.11.19 *'Applicants should safeguard any mineral resources on the proposed site as far as possible, taking into account the long-term potential of the land use after any future decommissioning has taken place'*. Paragraph 5.11.28 states *'Where a proposed development has an impact upon a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA), the Secretary of State should ensure that appropriate mitigation measures have been put in place to safeguard mineral resources'*. A preliminary qualitative minerals assessment is presented in **ES: Appendix 16.2 Minerals Resource Assessment Desk Study [EN0110014/APP/6.3.16.2]** which identifies mineral resources that are crossed by the Order Limits and the potential effects are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter.
- Paragraph 5.16.7 of NPS EN-1 states that the ES should describe *'any impacts of the proposed project on [...] source protection zones (SPZs) around potable groundwater abstractions'*. Groundwater and groundwater receptors, including source protection zones crossed by the Order Limits are described in Section 16.6 and **ES: Appendix 16.1 Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment [EN0110014/APP/6.3.16.1]** and the potential effects are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter.
- NPS EN-3 (Ref 16-11)
 - Paragraph 2.10.84 of NPS EN-3 states *'for projects in England, applicants should consider whether they need to provide geotechnical and hydrological information (such as identifying the presence of peat according to country-specific designations at each site)'*. Paragraph 2.10.148 of NPS EN-3 states *'where developments are proposed on peat, to ensure the development will result in*

minimal disruption to the ecology, hydrology, or release of CO₂, and the carbon balance savings of the scheme are maximised, the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the solar farm layout and construction methods have been designed to minimise soil disturbance and other peatland impacts during construction and maintenance of roads, tracks and other infrastructure and where possible are compatible with raised water table management’.

Identification of Peat deposits is undertaken in **ES: Appendix 16.1**

Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment

[EN0110014/APP/6.3.16.1] and described in Section 16.6. Potential effects on peat soils are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter.

- NPS EN-5 (Ref 16-12)
 - Paragraph 2.2.10 of NPS EN-5 states that there is a duty on the Applicant to *‘have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and ...do what [they] reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects ... In the rare case that the developer is not a licence-holder, the developer will nonetheless be influenced by the duties laid out in Section 9, even though they are not themselves under obligation’.* Sites designated for their geological importance are identified in Section 16.6 and the potential effects are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter. Matters relating to visual impacts are discussed in **ES: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [EN0110014/APP/6.1.7]**.
 - Paragraph 2.9.26 of NPS EN-5 states that *‘In such cases the Secretary of State should only grant development consent for underground or subsea sections of a proposed line over an overhead alternative if they are satisfied that the benefits accruing from the former proposal clearly outweigh any extra economic, social, or environmental impacts that it presents, the mitigation hierarchy has been followed, and that any technical obstacles associated with it are surmountable. In this context it should consider... the potentially very disruptive effects of undergrounding on ... soil (including peat soils) [and] geology’.* Identification of Peat deposits is undertaken in **ES: Appendix 16.1: Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment [EN0110014/APP/6.3.16.1]** and described in Section 16.6. Potential effects on peat soils are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter. Sites designated for their geological importance are identified in Section 16.6 and the potential effects are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter.

16.1.3 National Planning Policy Framework - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as revised in December 2024 sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the Government for operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State's (SoS) consideration of the Scheme.

- Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that *'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
 - a) *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);...*
 - f) *remediation and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate'.*
- Paragraph 192 of the NPPF states that *'To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:*
 - a) *Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*
 - b) *promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.*
- Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that *'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that:*
 - a) *a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation (as well as potential impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation);*
 - b) *after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and*

c) adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments’.

- Paragraph 223 of the NPPF states that ‘*Planning policies should:*

a) provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance, but not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction; ...

c) safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas; and adopt appropriate policies so that known locations of specific minerals resources of local and national importance are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this should be avoided (whilst not creating a presumption that the resources defined will be worked);

d) set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practical and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place.’

- 16.1.4 A Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment and a Preliminary Land Stability Risk Assessment are presented within **Appendix 16.1: Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment [EN0110014/APP/6.3.16.1]** and the potential effects are discussed in Section 16.8 of this Chapter. Intrusive Ground Investigations and assessment will be undertaken post consent.

Planning Guidance

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 16.1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), as follows:

- Land Affected by Contamination, which describes how to manage land affected by contamination;
- Minerals, which details how mineral resources can be safeguarded against sterilisation by unsuitable development; and
- Land Stability, which explains how to ensure development is suitable for the ground conditions.

Environment Agency Groundwater Protection Position Statements (2018)

- 16.1.6 The EA regulates activities that may impact groundwater resources, to prevent and limit pollution. The EA Groundwater Protection Position Statements (Ref 16-13) require the promoters of schemes of national or regional significance to protect groundwater when choosing the location for

their activity or development and to identify the potential pollution linkages and apply best available techniques to mitigate the risks.

- 16.1.7 Section A of 'The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection (general principles)' (Ref 16-14) includes the following:

'A1: Wherever legislation allows, the Environment Agency will use a tiered, risk-based approach to regulate activities that may impact groundwater resources and to prevent and limit pollution.'

A2: Development must be appropriate to the sensitivity of the Site. Where the potential consequences of a development or activity are serious or irreversible the Environment Agency will adopt the precautionary principle to manage and protect groundwater. The Environment Agency will also apply this principle in the absence of adequate information with which to conduct an assessment.'

A3: The Environment Agency encourages everyone whose activities may impact upon groundwater to consider the groundwater protection hierarchy in their strategic plans when proposing new development or activities. The aim is to avoid potentially polluting activities being located in the most sensitive locations for groundwater'.

- 16.1.8 Section C of The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection (Infrastructure) states the following:

'If national need for the provision and location of major developments overrides Environment Agency objections, the Environment Agency will raise its concerns and make every use of environmental impact assessment in addition to other measures to achieve environmental protection. Where developments receive approval against Environment Agency advice, it will apply section A - general protection position statements'.

England Peat Action Plan

- 16.1.9 The England Peat Action Plan (Ref 16-15) was published in 2021 by DEFRA. The plan aims to prevent further loss of peatland habitats and to restore more peatland landscapes to their natural state. The plan states:

'We want to ensure that the value of peatlands is taken into account when development is considered, including through biodiversity net gain. Some areas of peatland are potentially susceptible to development pressure and it is vital that planning policies reflect the importance of managing peatlands and avoid detrimental climate, water and biodiversity impacts from development'.

Local Planning Policy

16.1.10 The Scheme is located within the administrative area of South Norfolk and Broadlands District Council, and Norfolk County Council who are the host authorities. Local planning plan policies which are relevant to the assessment of Ground Conditions and have informed the Ground Conditions assessment are detailed below.

- **South Norfolk Local Plan.** South Norfolk Council adopted the South Norfolk Local Plan in March 2015. The plan comprises a suite of documents of which the following policy is relevant to the Scheme.

Development Management Policies Document – Policy DM 3.14 (Pollution, health and safety).

‘a) All development should minimise and where possible reduce the adverse impact of all forms of emissions and other forms of pollution and ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality or water courses.

b) When assessed individually or cumulatively, development proposals should ensure that there will be no unacceptable impacts on: i. Air quality ii. Surface and ground water quality iii. Land quality and condition iv. Health and safety of the public.

c) Permission will only be granted on or near contaminated land if it is subject to remediation which will make it safe for the proposed use. On a contaminated site or one suspected to be contaminated or within 250metres (or on more if considered appropriate on a risk based approach) of an existing or disused landfill site, applications will need to be accompanied with an assessment of the extent of contamination on the Site and any possible risks’.

- A Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment and a Preliminary Land Stability Risk Assessment are presented within **Appendix 16.1: Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment [EN0110014/APP/6.3.16.1]** and the potential effects are discussed in Section 16.8 of this ES Chapter.
- **Greater Norwich Local Plan.** Both Broadland District and South Norfolk Councils have worked with Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council to prepare the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP). The GNLP was adopted by Broadland District Council on 28 March 2024 and by South Norfolk Council on 25 March 2024. The following policies are relevant to the Scheme.

Policy 2.7 - ‘development proposals should, where relevant... avoid risks of unacceptable levels of soil, air, water and noise pollution and/or land instability’.

Policy 2.10 – *‘development proposals should, where relevant... protect water quality’.*

17 Chapter 17 Electromagnetic Fields

- 17.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 17 Electromagnetic Fields [EN0110014/APP/6.1.17]**

Legislation

- 17.1.2 The Electromagnetic Compatibility Directive 2014/30/EU (Ref 17-1) relates to CE marking (Conformité Européene) which signifies that a product meets EU safety, health, and environmental standards, ensuring electrical and electronic equipment does not generate or is not affected by electromagnetic disturbances
- 17.1.3 From 1 January 2021, the UKCA (UK Conformity Assessed) mark (Ref 17-2) started to replace the CE mark for goods sold within Great Britain, and the CE mark has continued to be required for goods sold in Northern Ireland and accepted in Great Britain. Businesses have the flexibility to use either the UKCA or CE marking to sell products in Great Britain. All proposed cables will be 'UKCA' and/or 'CE' marked.
- 17.1.4 Levels of EMF exposure are usually controlled by legislative limits placed on the design and manufacture of electrical products and infrastructure. All cables for the Scheme will be 'UKCA' and/or 'CE' marked.
- 17.1.5 The Electromagnetic Compatibility Regulations 2016 (Ref 17-3) ensures that electrical and electronic equipment should not generate or be affected by electromagnetic disturbance.

National Planning Policy

- 17.1.6 The National Policy Statement (NPS) for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5) (Ref 17-4) includes planning guidance for developers of nationally significant electricity network infrastructure projects and have been considered within this Chapter, particularly paragraphs 2.9.45 – 2.9.59, 2.10.11 – 2.10.13, and 2.11.9 – 2.11.16 of EN-5 which are specifically related to EMF.

Guidance

- 17.1.7 The UK Government's advice (Ref 17-1) on exposure to EMF radiation in the everyday environment, including electrical appliances in the home and mobile phones, has been considered.
- 17.1.8 The UK Government's advice and guidance on public exposure limits to EMF radiation, including NPS EN-5, is designed to comply with the 1998

International Commission on the Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines (Ref 17-4, Ref 17-5) in terms of the 1999 EU Recommendation.

- 17.1.9 The reference limits presented within the ICNIRP guidelines have been considered when considering the impact upon human health from EMF.
- 17.1.10 National Grid emfs.info (Ref 17-6) provides additional guidance regarding the typical electromagnetic field strength of overhead and underground cables.

18 Other Environmental Matters

- 18.1.1 This Section provides a summary of applicable legislation, planning policy and other guidance documents against which the Scheme has been considered relating to **ES: Chapter 18 Other Environmental Matters [EN0110014/APP/6.1.16]**

18.2 Major Accidents and Disasters

Legislation and Regulations

- 18.2.1 The EIA Regulations (Ref 18-1) contain text relevant to Major Accidents and Disasters.
- 18.2.2 Schedule 4, Paragraph 5(d) of the EIA Regulations requires that the EIA provides a description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment resulting from the 'risks to human health, cultural heritage or the environment (for example due to accidents or disasters)' and Schedule 4, Paragraph 8 requires that the EIA provides '*a description of the expected significant adverse effects of the development on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned*'.

Planning Policy

- 18.2.3 There are no specific clauses of National Planning Statements (NPSs) relevant to the Major Accidents and Disasters assessment. NPS EN-1 (December 2025) (Ref 18-2) sets out matters relating to safety; however, this mainly applies to schemes that are subject to the Control of Major Accidents hazards (COMAH) Regulations. The Scheme is not subject to the COMAH Regulations (2015) (Ref 18-3) but the Scheme has considered Section 4.13 of NPS EN-1 (December 2025).
- 18.2.4 There are no specific clauses of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) (Ref 18-4) relevant to the Scheme and the Major Accidents and Disasters assessment. Although not directly relevant to energy developments, the NPPF does refer, at Paragraph 101, to the fact that '*planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements*'.
- 18.2.5 There is no relevant local policy pertaining to major accidents and disasters

Guidance

18.2.6 The major accidents and disasters assessment has been carried out in accordance with the principles contained within the following appropriate guidance:

- ISEP 'Major Accidents and Disasters in EIA: A Primer' (Ref 18-5)

18.3 Telecommunications, Utilities, and Television

Legislation

18.3.1 Effects relating to infrastructure are not environmental effects and therefore there is no requirement to include an assessment of these effects under the EIA Regulations. However, given the nature of the Scheme, there is the potential to affect existing utility infrastructure above and below ground.

Planning Policy

18.3.2 There are no specific clauses of National Planning Statements (NPSs) relevant to the telecommunications, utilities and television assessment.

18.3.3 NPS EN-3 (January 2026) (Ref 18-6) and NPS EN-5 (Ref 18-7) discuss connection to the National Grid and provision of cabling in relation to the Site Design, however, does not contain any clauses relating to the prior existence of utilities infrastructure.

Guidance

18.3.4 The Telecommunications, utilities and television assessment has been carried out in accordance with the principles contained within the following appropriate guidance:

- Health and Safety Executive guidance document HS(G) 47 Avoiding Danger from Underground Services (Ref 18-8).
- Health and Safety Executive guidance document HS(G) 141 Electrical Safety on Construction Sites (Ref 18-9)
- Health and Safety Executive guidance note GS 6 Avoiding Danger from Overhead powerlines (Ref 18-10)
- The Horlock Rules (guidelines for the design and siting of substations) (Ref 18-11)

18.4 Glint and Glare

Legislation

18.4.1 The glint and glare assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following legislation:

- The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.
- The Air Navigation Order 2016.

Policy

18.4.2 The glint and glare assessment has been carried out in accordance with the principles contained within the following appropriate policies:

- NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure ('EN-3') (Ref 18-6).

Guidance

18.4.3 The glint and glare assessment has been carried out in accordance with the principles contained within the following appropriate guidance:

- Pager Power Glint and Glare Guidance, Fourth Edition (Ref 18-12);
- National Planning Practice Guidance – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy - Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (Ref 18-13);
- The FAA guidance 'Technical Guidance for Evaluating Selected Solar Technologies on Airports (Ref 18-14);
- Interim Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) guidance – Solar Photovoltaic Systems (Ref 18-15);
- CAA – CAP738: Safeguarding Aerodromes 3rd Edition (Ref 18-16);
- US Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) Administration Policy (Ref 18-17).

18.5 Waste and Materials

Legislation and Regulations

18.5.1 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Ref 18-18) puts measures in place to manage waste, addressing issues relating to air quality, land contamination, reducing pollution and water pollution. Section 4 of this Act

- sets out the duties and the requirements of the local authority as the relevant controllers of waste handling and control of environmental pollution.
- 18.5.2 The Environment Act 2021 (Ref 18-19) is legislation that makes provisions for environmental protection and establishing environmental targets. It also outlines the priority for waste reduction and resource efficiency. The Act promotes circular economy by encouraging recycling and reducing waste.
- 18.5.3 The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 (Ref 18-20) aims to streamline and consolidate the permitting system and compliance regime for activities that could harm human health or the environment. Part 2 of these regulations set out the requirements for obtaining environmental permits including for the function of handling waste.
- 18.5.4 The Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 (Ref 18-21) transposes the Waste Framework Directive into national law, as amended by the Waste (Miscellaneous Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This therefore secures the use of the waste hierarchy through provisions in relation to waste prevention, waste management (including the designation of recycling and recovery targets), and the extent of duties in relation to the waste hierarchy, the collection of, and the use of collected waste.
- 18.5.5 The Hazardous Waste Regulations (England and Wales) 2005 (amended 2006) (Ref 18-22) establishes a comprehensive framework for managing hazardous waste. The regulations control hazardous waste, ensuring its safe handling from all stages including production, transportation and the disposal of hazardous waste. This includes classification of hazardous waste to ensure it can be properly identified, and separated from non-hazardous waste, and the duties imposed to control the movement and handling of hazardous waste.
- 18.5.6 The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013 (Ref 18-23) aims to reduce the amount of electrical and electronic waste going to landfill and improve the recovery and recycling rates of these products. These regulations are part of the broader effort to promote a circular economy by ensuring that valuable materials are recovered and reused, reducing the environmental impact of electronic waste. These regulations further set out obligations for producers and distributors of electronic waste to collect, treat, recover and dispose of waste electrical equipment from consumers.
- 18.5.7 The Waste Batteries and Accumulators Regulations 2009 (Ref 18-24) aims to ensure that environmental protection against contamination from the disposal of batteries (including 'industrial' scale battery energy storage units) is underpinned in legislation. This includes compulsory implementation of collection, retrieval and recycling of batteries and accumulators by their producer or distributor, and the prevention of batteries and accumulators from being incinerated or sent to landfill.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

- 18.5.8 National Policy Statements - National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy tests against which the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme will be considered. Listed below are the details of the elements of NPS considered relevant to the waste and materials assessment.
- National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1) – Overarching NPS EN-1 (Ref 18-2) sets out in Section 5.15 Resource and Waste Management the strategy that should be taken regarding reducing the amount of waste being produced where possible and by trying to use it as a resource;
 - Paragraph 5.15.1 states that: *‘Government policy on hazardous and non hazardous waste is intended to protect human health and the environment by producing less waste and by using it as a resource wherever possible. Where this is not possible and disposal is required as a last resort, waste management regulation ensures that waste is disposed of in a way that is least damaging to the environment and to human health.’*
 - It is acknowledged that Paragraph 5.15.2 states: *‘Sustainable waste management is implemented through the waste hierarchy, which sets out the priorities that must be applied when managing waste. These are (in order and as shown on Diagram 1.1):*
 - *Prevention;*
 - *Preparing for reuse;*
 - *Recycling;*
 - *Other recovery, including energy recovery; and*
 - *Disposal.’*
- 18.5.9 Paragraph 5.15.3 states ‘Disposal of waste should only be considered where other waste management options are not available or where it is the best overall environmental outcome.’
- 18.5.10 Paragraphs 5.15.6 to 5.15.13 outline the considerations for the applicant’s assessment.
- Paragraph 5.15.8 states that: ‘The arrangements described and a report setting out the sustainable management of waste and use of resources should include information on how re-use and recycling will be maximised

in addition to the proposed waste recovery and disposal system for all waste generated by the development. They should also include an assessment of the impact of the waste arising from development on the capacity of waste management facilities to deal with other waste arising in the area for at least five years of operation.’

- Paragraph 5.15.9 goes on to state that: ‘The applicant must consider the Circular Economy and how to ensure that their project aligns with the government’s circular economy ambitions.’
- Finally, at paragraph 5.15.12: ‘Applicants are also encouraged to prepare a construction materials management plan to inform the use of construction best practices in relation to storing materials in an adequate and protected place on site to prevent waste, or degeneration of valuable materials, for example, from accidental damage or excessive weathering.’

18.5.11 Paragraphs 5.15.14 to 5.15.19 go on to outline the considerations for Secretary of State decision making.

- Paragraph 5.15.15 states that The Secretary of State should be satisfied that:

‘Any such waste will be properly managed, both on-site and off-site.

The waste from the proposed facility can be dealt with appropriately by the waste infrastructure which is, or is likely to be, available. Such waste arisings should not have an adverse effect on the capacity of existing waste management facilities to deal with other waste arisings in the area.

Adequate steps have been taken to minimise the volume of waste arisings, and of the volume of waste arisings sent for recovery or disposal, except where that is the best overall environmental outcome.’



Figure 18.1: Waste Hierarchy

National Planning Policy Framework

18.5.12 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 18-4) as revised in December 2024 does not directly cover waste and materials in a dedicated section. However, the NPPF does support sustainable waste management through several policies:

- Making effective use of land;
- The general environmental objective, which includes minimising waste and pollution and using natural resources prudently;
- Encouraging the reuse of existing resources;
- Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals; and
- Plan-making.

Waste National Policy, Guidance, and Strategies

18.5.13 The National Planning –Policy for Waste (NPPW) 2014 (Ref 18-25) outlines the UK government’s approach to waste management planning. The waste management framework in England guides on how to reduce and minimise the environmental impact via sustainable waste management facilities. This is supporting by National Planning Practice Guidance: Waste (published 2015) which gives additional guidance on the implementation of the waste hierarchy and duties for waste local authorities.

- 18.5.14 Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (Ref 18-26) - The Environmental Improvement Plan is the first revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan, mandated by the Environment Act 2021. It outlines specific targets, commitments, and actions to achieve the 10 goals set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan, reinforcing the long-term vision for environmental health and sustainability.
- 18.5.15 The Waste Management Plan for England 2021 (Ref 18-27) - The Waste Management Plan for England provides an overview of the current waste management in England. The plan aligned with the requirements of the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 consolidating existing waste management policies into a single national plan without introducing new policies. The Plan sets out the application of the waste hierarchy in England, and re-emphasis the importance of the government's strategic ambitions on waste management, producer and consumer obligations, and re-emphasising key recycling and recovery targets defines by national legislation.
- 18.5.16 A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment 2018 (Ref 18-28) - A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018) outlines the UK government's long-term strategy to enhance the natural environment within a generation. The plan includes several goals including 'minimising waste' which includes:
- Working towards our ambition of zero avoidable waste by 2050;
 - Working to a target of eliminating avoidable plastic waste by end of 2042;
 - Meeting all existing waste targets – including those on landfill, reuse and recycling – and developing ambitious new future targets and milestones;
 - Seeking to eliminate waste crime and illegal waste sites over the lifetime of this Plan, prioritising those of highest risk. Delivering a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour; and
 - Significantly reducing and where possible preventing all kinds of marine plastic pollution – in particular material that came originally from land.
- 18.5.17 Our Waste, Our Resources, A Strategy for England 2018 (Ref 18-29) – Our Waste, Our Resources, A Strategy for England outlines the UK government's approach to managing waste and resources sustainably. The strategy aims to minimise waste, promote resource efficiency, and transition towards a circular economy. Chapter 3 focuses on 'resource recovery and waste management' which addresses the following:
- Improve recycling rates by ensuring a consistent set of dry recyclable materials is collected from all households and businesses;

- Improve working arrangements between and better support performance of local authorities;
- Address barriers to the use of recycled materials; and
- Encourage waste producers and managers to implement the waste hierarchy in respect of hazardous waste.

18.5.18 The strategy aligns with the broader goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan.

18.5.19 The Waste Prevention Programme for England: Maximising Resources, Minimising Waste 2023 (Ref 18-30). The Waste Prevention Programme for England outlines the government's strategy to manage resources and reduce waste, aiming to transition towards a circular economy. The waste prevention programme outlines the approach to achieving the second strategic principle of the Resources and Waste Strategy: preventing waste from occurring initially and managing it more effectively when it does, highlighting the following key themes:

- Designing out waste: Including ecodesign and consumer information requirements, and Extended Producer Responsibility schemes;
- Systems and services: Including collection and take-back services, encouraging reuse, repair, leasing businesses and facilities; and
- Data and information: including materials databases, product passports (sets of data, unique to the specific product that can be accessed online and give detailed information on, for example, contained materials, components and history, to support improved outcomes such as higher quality recycling) and voluntary corporate reporting.

Local Planning Policy

18.5.20 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC) and South Norfolk Council (SNC) who are the host authorities, with NCC being the host authority for waste. Local planning plan policies which are relevant to waste and have informed the waste and materials assessment are detailed below.

- The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (NM&WLP) (Ref 18-31) was adopted in May 2025. This sets out how Norfolk County Council manages mineral extraction and waste disposal across the county. It guides where these activities can take place and ensures they are carried out in a way that protects Norfolk's environment and communities.
- The NM&WLP covers the period to the end of 2038. The NM&WLP replaces and consolidates the following Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents with one Local Plan:

- The Norfolk Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) (the 'Core Strategy') (adopted in 2011);
 - The Norfolk Waste Site Specific Allocations DPD (adopted in 2013); and
 - The Norfolk Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD (adopted in 2013). The Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD was subsequently amended by the adoption of the Single Issue Silica Sand Review in December 2017.
- The NM&WLP outlines strategic objectives for waste management under Section 4.2, including:
 - WSO1. Support the prevention and minimisation of waste generation in line with the Waste Hierarchy, and where waste cannot be avoided, maximise the recovery value from waste; and
 - WSO2. To support an increase in the proportion and the quantity of waste that is re-used, recycled and recovered within Norfolk.
 - WSO6. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions, primarily by moving waste up the hierarchy to minimise the need for landfill and by minimising waste transport and distance by locating new waste facilities as close as practicable to the origin of the waste.
 - The plan recognises that waste is an inevitable by-product of economic and social activity, but also highlights its potential value as a resource, either as a material input or through energy recovery. The plan acknowledges the economic role of the waste sector in Norfolk, both as an employer and as a service essential to business productivity and environmental protection.
 - To support a plan-led approach to waste management, the NM&WLP includes several policies, notably:
 - Policy WP1: Sustainable waste management - The policy supports the strategy for waste management in Norfolk in ensuring there is enough capacity to manage the expected amounts of Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW), commercial and industrial (C&I) waste, and inert waste. It also includes appropriate provision for handling, transferring, and managing hazardous waste, while recognising that due to the relatively small quantities involved, it may not be practical for Norfolk to host a full range of hazardous waste facilities. However, Norfolk may accommodate certain specialist facilities that also serve other areas;

- Policy WP11: Disposal of inert waste by landfill – specifically: *‘The landfilling of inert waste that could practicably be recycled will not be acceptable. Conditions will be placed on planning permissions to ensure that only pre-sorted wastes are landfilled’*; and
- Policy WP12: Non-hazardous and hazardous waste landfill – specifically: *‘The landfilling of waste that could practicably be recycled, composted or recovered will not be acceptable. Conditions will be placed on planning permissions to ensure that only residual source-separated or pre-sorted waste is landfilled.’*
- The NM&WLP highlights that Norfolk has facilities for handling hazardous waste, including that which is waste from electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), that also caters for inbound hazardous waste from elsewhere in the UK. Whilst this identifies waste handling capabilities within the host authority area, it is also noted that Norfolk does not have any hazardous waste landfill capacity. This therefore requires all hazardous waste to be fully treated, or transported outside the county if it is to be sent to landfill.

Other Guidance

- 18.5.21 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following other guidance documents.
- 18.5.22 The Institute of Sustainability and Environment Professionals (ISEP) (formally the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)) guide to: Materials and Waste in Environmental Impact Assessment – Guidance for a proportionate approach (2020) (Ref 18-32) provides a clear framework for determining the methodology for assessing waste and materials impacts. This includes defining the area of influence subject to study, applying sensitivity criteria, and defining how to assess the magnitude of impacts. As a result, this guidance has been incorporated into the assessment in the rest of this chapter.
- 18.5.23 Waste Duty of Care Code of Practice (Ref 18-33) provides practical guidance on how to meet waste duty of care requirements in England. It applies to anyone who produces, carries, keeps, treats, disposes of, or has control of waste. The main goal is to ensure waste is managed safely and responsibly and only handled by authorised businesses. It outlined the following aspects of the waste duty of care requirements: prevent unauthorised or harmful deposit, treatment or disposal, prevent a breach of an environmental permit or breach of a permit condition, prevent the escape of waste, transfer waste to an authorised person, provide an accurate description of waste and retention of waste documentation. It also outlines specific requirements for hazardous waste, EEE, separate collection of waste and requirements when sending waste to landfill.

18.5.24 The Waste Hierarchy (produced under Reg 15(1) of the Waste (E&W) Regulations 2011) (Ref 18-34) ranks waste management options based on their environmental impact. It prioritises preventing waste first, followed by preparing for reuse, recycling, recovery, and lastly, disposal (e.g., landfill). This hierarchy is designed to minimize waste and its environmental footprint.

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