

Public Notice

As required by European Directive 2001/42/EC (Strategic Environmental Assessment) and the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Statutory Instrument 2004 No.1633) and The European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive) Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended)

South Norfolk Council

Hereby gives notice of its decision not to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) nor Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the South Norfolk Landscape Susceptibility in relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on the basis that the SPD (draft) does not present policies or proposals, and serves only to expand on existing policies within the Greater Norwich Local Plan and the South Norfolk Development Policies Planning Document. These policies have already been subject to SEA and Appropriate Assessment.

The South Norfolk Landscape Susceptibility in relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission (Draft) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is not likely to cause significant environmental effects. This determination is based on the (SEA) criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment as part of screening report. In addition, it will not have an effect on protected Habitats sites either alone, or in combination with other plans or projects based on the HRA criteria. The decision has been taken by the Place Shaping Manager following consideration of a detailed screening report and has been subject to formal consultation with the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England. Members of the public wishing to find out more should contact:

Place Shaping Team - South Norfolk Council T: [\(01508\) 533805](tel:01508533805) or email: localplan.snc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

**South Norfolk landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation,
storage and transmission**

Supplementary Planning Document (Draft)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report and

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

February 2025

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1 Introduction

- 1.1** The South Norfolk landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (draft) has been produced by The Landscape Partnership on behalf of South Norfolk Council. The SPD will apply to the whole of South Norfolk Council district area, excluding the Broads National Park, for which the Broads Authority is the local planning authority.
- 1.2** The purpose of the landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission SPD is to provide guidance for those seeking to identify suitable sites for the location of energy generation, storage and transmission projects. It also aims to inform South Norfolk Council's responses to energy-related proposals in the context of local and national planning policies and the need to reasonably minimise any adverse effects on the landscape and communities of South Norfolk, and to provide guidance as to which type of developments may or may not be suitable within different landscapes. The draft SPD supplements policies in the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) (Adopted 2024) and the South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document (Adopted 2015). The relevant GNLP policies as referred to in the SPD are Policy 2: and Policy 3. The relevant South Norfolk Development Management policies as referred to in the SPD are Policy DM 4.1, Policy DM 4.5, Policy DM 4.6, Policy DM 4.7, Policy DM 4.8 and Policy DM 4.9.
- 1.3** This screening report reviews a draft of the landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission SPD and is designed to test whether or not the contents of the draft SPD require:
- (a) a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The legislative background to SEA is set out in Section 2 below and Section 5 provides a screening assessment of the likely significant effects of the SPD and whether there is need for a full SEA.
 - (b) a full Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). The legislative background to HRA is set out in Section 3 below and Section 5 provides a screening assessment to highlight if there are any risks of the SPD having a significant effect on protected Habitat sites, either on its own or in combination with other proposals. The protected sites covered by this report are:

Habitats Site
Breckland SPA
Breckland SAC
The Wash SPA
The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC
The Wash Ramsar
North Norfolk Coast SAC

North Norfolk Coast SPA
North Norfolk Coast Ramsar
Norfolk Valley Fens SAC
Winterton – Horsey Dunes SAC
Great Yarmouth North Denes SPA
Broadland SPA
Broadland Ramsar
Breydon Water SPA
The Broads SAC
Redgrave & South Lopham Fens Ramsar
Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens SAC

2 The need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening

2.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA), regulations 16 and 17, local authorities were required to undertake a full Sustainability Appraisal for each of their SPDs. However, Regs 2 (5) and (6) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) 2009 regulations amended the 2004 Act to remove the requirement for local planning authorities to provide a sustainability assessment for SPDs.

2.2 However, the explanatory memo to the 2009 regulations at paragraph 8.29 states that “Local Planning Authorities will still need to screen their SPDs to ensure the legal requirements for sustainability appraisal are met where there are impacts that have not been covered in the appraisal of the parent DPD or where an assessment is required by the SEA Directive”.

2.3 Under the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required on certain Plans and Programmes. This is explained further in the [Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#). However, there are circumstances where SA/SEA is not required, and government guidance advises that SPDs in the form of design guides that supplement policies in Development Plan Documents (DPDs) will only require SEA where the Local Authority determines that they are likely to have a significant environmental effect.

2.4 The purpose of this document is to screen the landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission SPD (draft) to determine whether there are likely to be any significant environmental effects, which would require an SEA. The publications [A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive \(2005\) ODPM & Sustainability Appraisal Of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents \(2005\) ODPM](#) outline how plans should be ‘screened’ to determine whether the exceptions to SEA may apply. This is also outlined in the [Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 11-007-20140306](#).

3 The need for Habitats and Species Regulation (HRA) Screening

- 3.1 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of plans and projects is set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended). [Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations](#) requires consideration to be given to whether a Plan will have an effect on protected Habitats sites either alone, or in combination with other plans or projects. As per the [Habitat regulations assessment guidance](#) the process can have up to 3 stages: the first of which is Screening to check if the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the site's conservation objectives. If no significant effect is identified there is no need to go through the subsequent stages of Appropriate Assessment or Derogation. Both the GNLP (2024) and South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document (2015) were subject to full Habitat Regulations Assessment. Where screening identified a likely significant effect, Appropriate Assessment was undertaken and the mitigation measures identified were incorporated within the Plans, resulting in the conclusion that both documents would not lead to any adverse effects on Habitat sites within the Greater Norwich and South Norfolk area.

4 Policy Context

- 4.1 The South Norfolk landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission SPD (draft) will be supplementary to policies within the adopted development plan including GNLP Policy 2: Sustainable Communities and Policy 3: Environmental Protection and Enhancement and to the South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document Policy DM 4.1: Renewable Energy, Policy DM 4.5 Landscape Character Areas and River Valleys, Policy DM 4.6 Landscape Setting of Norwich, Policy DM 4.7: Strategic gaps between settlements within the Norwich Policy Area, Policy DM 4.8: Protection of Trees and Hedgerows and Policy DM 4.9: Incorporating landscape into design.

- 4.2 The draft SPD contains the following chapters:

- **Introduction:** provides background information on the purpose, rationale and key objectives of the SPD.
- **Planning Policy Context:** relating to the design and location of energy related developments, based on policies in the NPPF, GNLP and South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document and the overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1).
- **Methodology for the Landscape Susceptibility Study:** sets out the methodology for undertaking the study, key definitions, the study area, a desktop appraisal, sensitivity analysis, assessment of overall susceptibility to change, study limitations and the 7 landscape types (LTs) and 20 geographically discrete landscape areas (LCAs) that have been characterised in the published South Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 4: Landscape Character of the Rural Policy Area,

dated April 2006 (final amendments January 2008). It is these LCAs that are used to provide the areas of common landscape character whose susceptibility to change is assessed within the study forming the baseline for further analysis.

- **Energy-related Development Scenarios:** sets out the energy-related development scenarios considered in the study that could realistically come forward within South Norfolk district within the foreseeable future and comprise solar photovoltaic, anaerobic digestion plants, battery storage and electricity transmission and distribution works. For each development scenario considered, the following matters are considered: overview of development type development scale considered in the study, parameters assumed in the study, potential landscape effects, cumulative effects and design development guidelines.
- **Findings of the Landscape Susceptibility Study:** provides a summary of the findings of the study with reference to Appendix 3 containing detailed analysis of landscape susceptibility.
- **Local Landscape Character Assessment relating to Norwich Main Substation:** provides a local level Landscape Character Assessment, to set out the key characteristics and special features of a 5km radius from Norwich Main (excluding the area beyond the district boundary). This chapter seeks to assess the Landscape Character Areas surrounding Norwich Main and provide an assessment of sensitivity to the different energy-related development scenarios.
- **Policy DM 4.6: Landscape Setting of Norwich:** sets out background policy context of Chapter 4.5 of the South Norfolk Local Development Policies Document which considers the Landscape Setting of Norwich. The chapter provides commentary on how various development scenarios would accord with the objectives Policy DM 4.6 which seeks to ensure that all development proposals will not harm and will, where possible, enhance the landscape setting of Norwich with regard to: the Norwich Southern Bypass Landscape Protection Zone (NSBLPZ), Key Views, Undeveloped Approaches to Norwich and Gateways marking the arrival at and departure from Norwich.
- **Appendices 1-4:** includes Baseline Figures, Criteria for assessing Susceptibility Analysis, Landscape Susceptibility Analysis and Local Landscape Character Analysis.

4.3 The SPD provides guidance on how to implement policies that are material considerations in the determination of planning applications and inform Development Management decisions. The SPD provides further guidance to all parties seeking to comply with the Local Plan policies and will therefore be of particular use to developers, architects and agents looking to bring forward energy-related development.

5 Methodology

Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

- 5.1** The SPD (draft) is supplementary to policies 2 and 3 in the GNLP and to the South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document Policy DM 4.1, DM 4.5, DM 4.6, DM 4.7, DM 4.8 and DM 4.9 which have undergone full Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment. Therefore, there is no need to further assess these policies against the SA Objectives.

Strategic Environmental Assessment – Regulatory Requirements

- 5.2** To assess whether an SEA is required the local authority must undertake a screening process based on a standard set of criteria. This screening must be subject to consultation with Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England. Following consultation, the results of the screening process must be detailed in a Screening Statement, which is required to be made available to the public.
- 5.3** Using the criteria, detailed in [Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#), for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment, the following assessments have been made in Table 1 -2 below:

Table 1-2: SEA Criteria for Determining the Likely Significance of Effects on the South Norfolk landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission SPD (draft)

Criteria	Assessment	Likely significant environmental effect (Yes / No)
1. The characteristics of the plan having regard to:		
a) The degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	<p>The SPD is intended to be supplementary to the Policies 2 and 3 of the adopted GNLP and Policies DM 4.1, DM 4.5, DM 4.6, DM 4.7, DM 4.8 and DM 4.9 of the South Norfolk Development Policies Document.</p> <p>The SPD (draft) will be a significant piece of landscape susceptibility guidance in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission for new</p>	No

	energy-related development across the district and will be an important planning aid to assist the determination of planning applications and used to inform planning consultations. The SPD complements the South Norfolk District, Wind Turbine Landscape Sensitivity Study, dated April 2006 previously published by South Norfolk Council.	
b) The degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The SPD will be in conformity with national planning guidance and the adopted GNLP (2024) and South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document. It will provide additional practical guidance to policies that have already been scrutinised and consulted upon through the plan making process including SA/ SEA.	No
c) The relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	The SPD is intended to provide more detailed guidance on how the requirements of Policies 2 and 3 of the GNLP and Policies DM 4.1, DM 4.5, DM 4.6, DM 4.7, DM 4.8 and DM 4.9 of the South Norfolk Development Policies Document will be applied in practice, assisting the site specific design of energy-related infrastructure projects including appropriate approach to layout, siting and landscape proposals within the district. The SPD	No

	will promote sustainable development through reflecting local character. It will support the implementation of the environmental policies adopted within the GNLP (2024) and South Norfolk Development Policies Document (2015).	
(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	The SPD is intended to be supplementary to the GNLP Policies 2 and 3 and Policies DM 4.1, DM 4.5, DM 4.6, DM 4.7, DM 4.8 and DM 4.9 of the South Norfolk Development Policies Document, which seek to ensure no significant adverse impact on the landscape and natural environments. The SPD will promote and facilitate appropriate, well designed energy-related development in support of the planning policies contained within the development plan.	No
e) The relevance of the plan for the implementation of [European] Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).	The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance for those seeking to identify suitable sites for the location of energy generation, storage and transmission projects. It also aims to inform South Norfolk Council's responses to energy-related proposals in the context of local and national planning policies and the need to reasonably minimise any adverse effects on the landscape and communities of South Norfolk, and to provide guidance as to which type	No

	of developments may or may not be suitable within different landscapes. The GNLP 2024 contains other policies relating to these objectives	
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected having regard, in particular to:		
Criteria	Assessment	Likely significant environmental effect (Yes / No)
(a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The SPD is not expected to give rise to any significant environmental effects. The SPD seeks to ensure the effective and consistent delivery of GNLP policies 2 and 3 and Policies DM 4.1, DM 4.5, DM 4.6, DM 4.7, DM 4.8 and DM 4.9 of the South Norfolk Development Policies Document.	No
(b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The SPD is not considered to have any significant cumulative effects	No
(c) The transboundary nature of the effects	The SPD is not expected to give rise to transboundary effects.	No
(d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	There are no significant or likely risks to health or to the environment as a result of additional guidance to supplement the GNLP Policies 2 and 3 and Policies DM 4.1, DM 4.5, DM 4.6, DM 4.7, DM 4.8 and DM 4.9 of the South Norfolk Development Policies Document.	No
(e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Implementation of additional guidance will only be of benefit for the population.	No
(f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: i. Special natural	The SPD is not anticipated to adversely affect any special natural characteristic	No

characteristics or cultural heritage; ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; iii. Intensive land use.	or cultural heritage. Nor would the SPD be expected to lead to exceeded environmental quality standards or result in intensive land use.	
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	<p>The district of South Norfolk has very few international sites, and none entirely within the district boundary. Four small component units of The Broads SAC/Broadland SPA are within South Norfolk between Surlingham and Loddon with two other very small component units near Geldeston on the District's southern boundary. The River Wensum SAC forms the northern boundary of the district in the area near Costessey although for most of this section the SAC designation is mostly confined to the river channel rather than the wider floodplain. Two component units of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC are within South Norfolk, Coston Fen near Runhall and Florden Common. The adopted GNLP (2024) and South Norfolk Development Policies Document have been subject to the Habitat Regulations Assessment screening process. The SPD is not expected to have any adverse effects on areas with national community or international protection, however, this is assessed in the next section.</p>	No

5.4 To assess whether an Appropriate Assessment as a part of the HRA is required the local authority must undertake a screening process based on a standard set of criteria. This must be subject to consultation with Natural England. Table 3 below considers each relevant section of the draft South Norfolk landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission SPD in relation to whether there is potential for a likely significant effect on protected Habitat sites. This constitutes Stage 1 Screening as set out under paragraph 3.1 above. Consideration is given to the characteristics and location of the protected sites. The relevant sections are considered within the context of the GNLP and South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document policies from which they hang, and which have themselves been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment, as set out in section 3 above.

Table 3: HRA Screening for Likely significant effects of the South Norfolk landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Draft

Chapter	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
Introduction	This chapter sets out the background information on the purpose, rationale and key objectives of the SPD and does not promote new development and will therefore not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.	None	None	No
Planning Policy Context	This chapter sets out the legislative background relating to the design and location of energy related developments, based on policies in the NPPF, GNLP and South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document and the overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1). The guidance contained here does not in itself promote new development beyond what is required by Local Plan policy and will therefore not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.	None	None	No
Methodology for the Landscape Susceptibility Study	This chapter sets out the methodology for undertaking the study, key definitions, the study area, a desktop appraisal, sensitivity analysis, assessment of overall susceptibility to change,	None	None	No

	<p>study limitations and the 7 landscape types (LTs) and 20 geographically discrete landscape areas (LCAs) that have been characterised in the published South Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 4: Landscape Character of the Rural Policy Area, dated April 2006 (final amendments January 2008). It is these LCAs that are used to provide the areas of common landscape character whose susceptibility to changed is assessed within the study forming the baseline for further analysis. The content contained here does not in itself promote new development beyond what is required by Local Plan policies and will therefore, not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>			
Energy-related Development Scenarios	<p>This chapter sets out the energy-related development scenarios considered in the study that could realistically come forward within South Norfolk district within the foreseeable future and comprise solar photovoltaic, anaerobic digestion plants, battery storage and electricity transmission and distribution works. For each development scenario considered, the following matters are considered: overview of development type development scale considered in the study, parameters assumed in the study, potential landscape effects, cumulative effects and design development guidelines. The aim is to provide guidance for those seeking to identify suitable</p>	None	None	No

	<p>sites for the location of energy generation, storage and transmission projects. It also aims to inform South Norfolk Council's responses to energy-related proposals in the context of local and national planning policies and the need to reasonably minimise any adverse effects on the landscape and communities of South Norfolk, and to provide guidance as to which type of developments may or may not be suitable within different landscapes. It does not in itself promote new development and will therefore not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>			
Findings of the Landscape Susceptibility Study	<p>This chapter summarises the findings of the study with reference to Appendix 3 containing detailed analysis of landscape susceptibility. The aim is to provide guidance for those seeking to identify suitable sites for the location of energy generation, storage and transmission projects. It also aims to inform South Norfolk Council's responses to energy-related proposals in the context of local and national planning policies and the need to reasonably minimise any adverse effects on the landscape and communities of South Norfolk, and to provide guidance as to which type of developments may or may not be suitable within different landscapes. It does not in itself promote new development and will therefore not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>	None	None	No

Local Landscape Character Assessment relating to Norwich Main Substation	<p>This chapter provides a local level Landscape Character Assessment, to set out the key characteristics and special features of a 5km radius from Norwich Main (excluding the area beyond the district boundary). This chapter seeks to assess the Landscape Character Areas surrounding Norwich Main and provide an assessment of sensitivity to the different energy-related development scenarios. The aim is to provide guidance for those seeking to identify suitable sites for the location of energy generation, storage and transmission projects. It also aims to inform South Norfolk Council's responses to energy-related proposals in the context of local and national planning policies and the need to reasonably minimise any adverse effects on the landscape and communities of South Norfolk, and to provide guidance as to which type of developments may or may not be suitable within different landscapes. It does not in itself promote new development and will therefore not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>	None	None	No
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Policy DM 4.6: Landscape Setting of Norwich	This chapter sets out background policy context of Chapter 4.6 of the South Norfolk Local Development Policies Document which considers the Landscape Setting of Norwich. The chapter provides commentary on how various development scenarios would accord with the objectives of Policy DM 4.6 which seeks to ensure that all development proposals will not harm and will, where possible, enhance the landscape setting of Norwich with regard to: the Norwich Southern Bypass Landscape Protection Zone (NSBLPZ), Key Views, Undeveloped Approaches to Norwich and Gateways marking the arrival at and departure from Norwich. The aim is to provide guidance for those seeking to identify suitable sites for the location of energy generation, storage and transmission projects. It also aims to inform South Norfolk Council's responses to energy-related proposals in the context of local and national planning policies and the need to reasonably minimise any adverse effects on the landscape and communities of South Norfolk, and to provide guidance as to which type of developments may or may not be suitable within different landscapes. It does not in itself promote new development and will therefore not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.	None	None	No
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Appendices	The appendices include Baseline Figures, Criteria for assessing Susceptibility Analysis, Landscape Susceptibility Analysis and Local Landscape Character Analysis. The aim is to provide guidance for those seeking to identify suitable sites for the location of energy generation, storage and transmission projects. It also aims to inform South Norfolk Council's responses to energy-related proposals in the context of local and national planning policies and the need to reasonably minimise any adverse effects on the landscape and communities of South Norfolk, and to provide guidance as to which type of developments may or may not be suitable within different landscapes. It does not in itself promote new development and will therefore not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.	None	None	No
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6 Conclusion

- 6.1** The draft SPD does not introduce new policies or proposals outside the scope of the adopted Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) or the adopted South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document. It provides advice and guidance only and is in conformity with current national and local planning policy. It does not include any policies or site allocations. Instead, it supplements these policies by providing further detailed and specific guidance relating to energy-related developments. The policies in the GNLP and South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document have already been subject to HRA and SA/SEA.
- 6.2** The overall conclusions of the HRA undertaken for the adopted GNLP and adopted South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document (supported by the results of the screening undertaken for the SPD in this document) state that the plan is not likely to have adverse effect on the integrity of the European sites (Natura 2000 and Ramsar site(s)), either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. Therefore further 'Appropriate Assessment as per stage 2 of the HRA is not considered necessary or required for the SPD.
- 6.3** Furthermore, in accordance with Part 2(9) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as Amended including through EU exit legislation or SEA Regulations), South Norfolk Council, as the competent authority consider that the intended South Norfolk landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Draft) is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 6.4** The Council has consulted on this screening opinion with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency as per the HRA/ SEA regulations before the screening opinion is confirmed final. As such time, the determination notice will be published on our website.

Appendix 1: SEA and HRA Screening Opinion: Statutory Consultee Comments

The Council has consulted on this screening opinion with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency as per the HRA/ SEA regulations. These comments and responses are summarised below.

Statutory Body	Consultee Comments (as submitted)	South Norfolk Council Comments & Proposed Action
Natural England	<p>Thank you for your consultation request dated and received by Natural England on 6th March 2025.</p> <p>Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.</p> <p>Natural England has no comments to make on the SEA and HRA Screening for the South Norfolk Landscape Susceptibility in Relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission SPD.</p> <p>The lack of comment from Natural England should not be interpreted as a statement that there are no impacts on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may wish to make comments that might help the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to fully take account of any environmental risks and opportunities relating to this document.</p> <p>If you disagree with our assessment of this proposal as low risk, or should the proposal be amended in a</p>	N/A

	way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, please consult Natural England again	
Environment Agency	<p>Thank you for consulting us on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening and Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening for South Norfolk Landscape Susceptibility in relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Draft).</p> <p>We have reviewed the documents, as submitted, and do not disagree with the conclusion that neither further 'Appropriate Assessment' as per stage 2 of the HRA nor an SEA is necessary or required for the SPD.</p> <p>We trust this advice is useful.</p>	N/A
Historic England	<p>Thank you for consulting Historic England about the above Screening Opinion. Thank you for also sharing a draft of the SPD with us. For clarity, this response provides our SEA screening opinion. We have not provided detailed comments on the draft SPD itself but will provide those when we are consulted during the public consultation on the document.</p> <p>SEA Screening The SPD is being prepared by a local authority under legislative and administrative provisions.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response to the SEA and HRA Screening for the draft Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission SPD on 2nd April.</p> <p>I have considered your response and discussed it with colleagues, including our Assistant Director Ben Burgess. At present, we do not consider it necessary to commission a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the South Norfolk Landscape Susceptibility SPD.</p> <p>In addition to Historic England, we have consulted and had responses from the Environment Agency and Natural</p>

	<p>The SPD relates to energy and sets a framework for future development consent of projects. In identifying which areas have higher levels of susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission, the documents will have an influence of the use of small areas at a local level. Energy generation, storage and transmission projects have the potential for significant effects on the environment including the historic environment.</p> <p>We acknowledge that the SPD doesn't actually allocate land for energy projects and therefore on this particular basis would not necessarily require SEA. However, our experience of similar studies highlights that they can often lead to the identification of 'suitable areas' for renewable energy. We therefore consider that it would be prudent to assess the likely environmental impacts of the SPD now through SEA.</p> <p>Moreover, on the basis that the South Norfolk landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission Supplementary Planning Document (Draft) is being prepared by the local authority under legislative and administrative provisions and in terms of our area of interest, seems likely to result in significant effects upon the historic environment, Historic England considers that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required for this document.</p>	<p>England on the draft SPD. The Environment Agency reviewed the document, and said "as submitted, [we] do not disagree, with the conclusion that neither further Appropriate Assessment as per stage 2 of the HRA nor an SEA is necessary or required for the SPD. Natural England said they had no comment to make on the SEA and HRA screening and consider the SPD as 'low risk'.</p> <p>We have considered your response alongside those of the Environment Agency and Natural England. On balance, and taking all three responses together, our view at the present time is not to commission an Appropriate Assessment or an SEA. This judgement is also based upon the fact that the SPD will not create or amend new planning policy, nor does it identify or allocate new land for energy-related development projects.</p> <p>The SPD's purpose is to inform developers in the preparation of planning applications and to assist planning officers in the determination of those schemes. This will assist in enabling developers to submit higher quality schemes and should enable planning officers to make timelier decisions but will not diminish the ability of statutory consultees to comment on live planning applications.</p> <p>Historic England are consulted on any planning applications that could affect the historic environment. This ensures that any potential impacts on heritage assets</p>
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	<p>Historic England strongly advises that the conservation team of your authority and your archaeological advisors are closely involved throughout the preparation of the SEA of this Plan. They are best placed to advise on; local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the HER (formerly SMR); how the policy or proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.</p> <p>Historic England has produced guidance for all involved in in undertaking SEA exercises which gives advice on issues relating to the historic environment. This can be found here.</p> <p>This opinion is based on the information provided by you in the document dated March 2025 and, for the avoidance of doubt, does not affect our obligation to advise you on, and potentially object to any specific development proposal which may subsequently arise from this or later versions of the plan which is the subject to consultation, and which may, despite the SEA, have adverse effects on the environment.</p> <p>The views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the</p>	<p>are thoroughly assessed and mitigated during the planning application stage. The existing planning framework includes robust mechanisms for protecting the historic environment. Any development proposals related to energy generation, storage, and transmission would be subject to these protections and consultations, ensuring that heritage considerations are fully integrated into the decision-making process.</p> <p>This SPD remains at a relatively early stage of preparation and will be subject to a six-week public consultation. The timetable is for the SPD to be adopted during autumn 2025.</p>
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	<p>overall decision on the need for an SEA is made.</p> <p>Finally, we recommend that the SPD itself should give appropriate, proportionate consideration to the historic environment (designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings) and historic landscape characterisation as part of defining the landscape susceptibility in relation to energy generation, storage and transmission.</p> <p>HRA Screening We defer to the other statutory consultees in relation to the HRA Screening.</p> <p>If you have any queries about any of the matters raised above or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.</p>	
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