



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

National Policy Statement for Energy - Update 2025

Appraisal of Sustainability – Appendices Vol.

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Appendix A. Glossary & List of Abbreviations

Table A-1: List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Term
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Now National Landscape)
AoS	Appraisal of Sustainability
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BAT	Best Available Techniques
BCCUS	Bioenergy with Carbon Capture Usage and Storage
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
BIM	Building Information Management
BMV	Best and Most Versatile
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CCA	Climate Change Act
CCC	Climate Change Committee
CCR	Carbon Capture Ready
CCS	Carbon Capture and Storage
CCUS	Carbon Capture Usage and Storage
CfD	Contracts for Difference
CHP	Combined Heat and Power
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CNP	Critical National Priority

CPS	Carbon Price Support
CSNP	Centralised Strategic Network Plans
DCO	Development Consent Order
DECC	Department for Energy and Climate Change
Defra	Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs
DfT	Department for Transport
DNOs	Distribution Network Operators
DTI	Department for Trade and Industry
DWSZ	Drinking Water Safeguard Zone
EA	Environment Agency
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EfW	Energy from Waste
EMF	Electro-Magnetic Field
EP	Environmental Permitting
EPR	Environmental Permitting Regulations
EPS	Emissions Performance Standards
EQLS	European Quality of Life Survey
ES	Environmental Statement
ETS	Emission Trading Scheme
EU	European Union
FCERM	Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GVA	Gross Value Added
GW	Giga Watt

HDD	Horizontal Directional Drilling
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HND	Holistic Network Design
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HMT	HM Treasury
HRA	Habitats Regulation Assessment
IED	Industrial Emissions Directive
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
kV	Kilo Volt
kWh	Kilo Watt hour
LDD	Local Development Document
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
LNRR	Local Nature Reserve
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
Mcm	Million standard cubic metres
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MNR	Marine Nature Reserves
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
MW	Mega Watt
MWe	Mega Watt equivalent
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NE	Natural England
NESO	National Energy System Operator

NGCC	Natural Gas Combined Cycle
NMVOC	Non-Methane Volatile Organic Compound
NNR	National Nature Reserves
NOx	Nitrogen Oxides
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Policy Guidance
NPS	National Policy Statement
NRW	Natural Resource Wales
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
NVZ	Nitrate Vulnerable Zone
NZ	Net Zero
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHA	Offshore Hybrid Assets
PM	Particulate Matter
PPP	Plans, Policies and Programmes
PV	Photovoltaic
RBD	River Basin District
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RO	Renewables Obligation
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
SCI	Sites of Community Importance
SCR	Selective Catalytic Reduction

SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SF6	Sulphur Hexafluoride
SLVIA	Seascape and Landscape Visual Impact Assessment
SNCI	Site Nature Conservation Interest
SO2	Sulphur Dioxide
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPZ	Source Protection Zone
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
TAN	Technical Advice Note
UK	United Kingdom
UKCIP	UK Climate Impacts Programme
UKETS	UK Emissions Trading Scheme
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WfH	Waste from Households
WHS	World Heritage Site

Appendix B. Response to Consultation

Table B-1: Overview of comments

Consultee	Comments	Response
Historic Environment Scotland	<p>Historic Environment Scotland are content with the assessment methodology provided and are satisfied with the scope and level of detail proposed. As the policy statement review and its assessment largely relate to England and Wales they have only some minor comments to offer.</p> <p><i>1. Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the AoS process?</i></p> <p>Page 13 – International – Heritage</p> <p>We note the inclusion of the Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage 2001 here. For clarity we would note that the UK has not ratified the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, but the Annex to the 2001 Convention – Rules Concerning Activities Directed at the Underwater Cultural Heritage provides an accepted model of ‘best practice’ for underwater archaeology.</p> <p>Page 22 – Scotland – Cross-Thematic</p> <p>Relevant heritage policy and strategy for Scotland include the following:</p> <p>Historic Environment Policy for Scotland</p> <p>Our Past, Our Future, The Strategy for Scotland’s Historic Environment</p>	<p>Additional documents noted and added to the Review of Plans and Policies in Appendix C – no additional AoS Themes identified and considered that amendments to AoS Framework are not required.</p>

	<p><i>2. Is there additional information that needs to be considered as part of the baseline data?</i></p> <p>Page 32 – Table 1 – Historic Environment</p> <p>We note that protected wrecks are included in this list. The protected wreck designation has been replaced in Scotland by Historic Marine Protected Areas (Historic MPAs).</p> <p>Historic MPAs protect marine historic assets of national importance in territorial waters around Scotland (out to 12 nautical miles). This includes historic shipwrecks and aircrafts. The Scottish Government designate marine protected areas (Historic MPAs) under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and Historic Environment Scotland advise Scottish Government.</p> <p>Details of Historic MPAs in Scottish waters can be found at https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/downloads/hmpas</p>	<p>Baseline data updated in Appendix D in line with consultation comment.</p>
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Consultee	Comments	Response
Natural England	<p><i>1. Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the AoS process?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural England agrees with the inclusion of the Environment Act as cross-thematic on page 14. We query why it is subsequently identified specifically in relation to landscape on page 16, but not in relation to any other theme. This appears to be an inconsistency of approach. Natural England notes that the identified plans etc. are all at national or international level. However, we would encourage the inclusion of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (should the timescales align with their publication through this year). These would be relevant to the theme ‘contribute to the delivery of biodiversity strategies and plans’ listed on page 24. In relation to the second bullet point on page 24, Natural England would expect the definition of Irreplaceable Habitats to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The definition in the NPPF glossary is “Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.” 	<p>The NPS makes extensive reference to the Environment Act 2021 and this is considered within the AoS.</p> <p>The NPS notes Local Nature Recovery Strategies (see EN-1) and notes reference should be made to these. The AoS considers these as part of the assessment. Note that due to the scale of the NPS (applying to all of England and Wales), it is not possible to show or consider all local designations.</p> <p>Clarification has been made on irreplaceable habitats.</p>

	<p>There are several documents referenced in the AoS that have been superseded with new versions, and these need to be updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Infrastructure Assessment 2023 (rather than 2018) (pg. 15 ‘Summary of PPP reviewed’) • 30by30 on land in England: confirmed criteria and next steps policy paper 2024 (rather than 2020) (pg. 18 ‘Summary of PPP reviewed’) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criteria-for-30by30-on-land-in-england/30by30-on-land-in-england-confirmed-criteria-and-next-steps • The Nature Recovery Network policy paper 2024 (rather than 2020) (pg. 18 ‘Summary of PPP reviewed’) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nature-recovery-network/naturerecovery-network • Introduction to the Green Infrastructure Framework - Principles and Standards for England, Natural England has been updated in 2023 (rather than 2021) (pg. 18 ‘Summary of PPP reviewed’) https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx • The Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool - Beta Test Version, Natural England 2024 (rather than 2021) (pg. 18 ‘Summary of PPP reviewed’) https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6414097026646016 • Biodiversity Net Gain. The calculator is no longer labelled as “metric 4.0” instead it is called 	<p>References to the identified plans and policies have been updated in Appendix C and the AoS report in line with the consultation comments.</p>
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	<p>"the statutory biodiversity metric calculation tool") (pg. 18 'Summary of PPP reviewed')</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain</p>	
	<p>Natural England considers that the below should also be included:</p> <p>1. Plan for Water: our integrated plan for delivering clean and plentiful water Policy paper 2023</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-water-our-integrated-plan-for-delivering-clean-and-plentiful-water/plan-for-water-our-integrated-plan-for-delivering-clean-and-plentiful-water#annex-b-statutory-bodies-and-organisations-responsible-for-the-water-system</p> <p>2. Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources – accessible summary Policy paper 2020</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/meeting-our-future-water-needs-a-national-framework-for-water-resources/meeting-our-future-water-needs-a-national-framework-for-water-resources-accessible-summary</p> <p>3. Water Resource Management Plans</p> <p>4. UK Biodiversity Framework (2024): https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/19a729f6-440e-4ac6-8894-cc72e84cc3bb/uk-biodiversity-framework.pdf</p> <p>5. UK National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2025):</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-national-biodiversity-strategy-and-action-plan</p>	<p>The plans and policies identified have been included within Appendix C.</p>

	<p>In the Environmental Themes section under Water Resources (pg. 26), Natural England considers that this could be expanded to include water quality. We consider that there is an additional common theme of enabling the sustainable use of water for people, business, and the environment.</p> <p>In the Environmental Themes section under Landscapes and Townscapes (pg. 27), Natural England considers that where it says, “protect those areas designated...for landscape value”, that this should be expanded to include the duty to further enhance its statutory purposes. This is because Section 245 of the https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/section/245/enacted Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (legislation.gov.uk) places a duty on relevant authorities (including local planning authorities) to seek to further the statutory purposes of a National Park, the Broads or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England in exercising their functions.</p>	<p>Theme added to section 4 of the AoS Report under ‘Water Resources’. Note that issues relating to Water Quality and Resources are addressed in Section 5.16 of EN-1.</p> <p>‘Landscapes and Townscapes’ theme within section 4 of the AoS Report was updated. Note that issues relating to Landscapes and the need to protect areas designated for their landscape value is addressed in Section 5.10 of EN-1.</p>
	<p><i>2. Is there additional information that needs to be considered as part of the baseline data?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 1 Biodiversity and Ecosystems (pg. 30) should also include potential SPAs, candidate SACs and listed or proposed Ramsar sites (as referred to on pg. 11). As well as areas secured as sites compensating for damage to a European site (which are protected under the Habitats Regulations). • Table 1 Biodiversity and Ecosystems (pg. 30) should include irreplaceable habitat and priority habitat data. • Table 1 Biodiversity and Ecosystems (pg. 30) could also include Natural England’s Living England map. The map shows the extent and 	<p>Information has been added to the baseline tables in Appendix D.</p> <p>Priority Habitat information has also been included in Table 4-3 of the AoS Report.</p>

	<p>distribution of 16 different habitats across England for 2022-23. (https://naturalenglanddefra.opendata.arcgis.com/maps/19aa7b1604434fd7a3b35f2fbfb9c519/about).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 1 Biodiversity and Ecosystems (pg. 30) could also include Natural England's Green Infrastructure maps. (https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Map.aspx). • Table 1 Landscape. This should also include the Broads. • Table 1. Air Quality. This should consider background air quality data held on the Air Pollution Information System (APIS). • Table 1 Water Quality and Resources should also consider Water Resource Management Plans. • Table 1 Soils, Geology, and Land Use could also include 'high likelihood' of Best and Most Versatile soils data and the main peat areas to the baseline data. • Natural England would expect the mitigation hierarchy to be used. We suggest some rewording of the fifth bullet point on page 36 to recognise the mitigation hierarchy, using the terms avoid, mitigate, compensate. 	<p>The Green Infrastructure network information is included in Table 4-3 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>The Broads National Park is included within National Park baseline in Appendix D, and is covered in Table 4-1 of the AoS Report under this receptor.</p> <p>Reference to the APIS is included in Appendix D.</p> <p>Water Resource Management Plans (WRMP) have been included in Appendix C following previous comments.</p> <p>Information on agricultural land and peatlands added to Appendix D.</p> <p>Issues relating to the application of the mitigation hierarchy are addressed in the NPS and AoS Report.</p>
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	<p><i>3. Do you consider that the range of sustainability problems and issues covered is appropriate?</i></p> <p>Natural England broadly agrees with the range of sustainability problems and issues are appropriate. However, we highlight that there are a number of matters of clarification within the topics areas that we consider need to be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 4 Biodiversity (1st column, pg. 39), the text written in bold is a little confusing. Natural England considers that it may be beneficial to set out a definition of what “green infrastructure” refers to in the paper. This should also consider blue infrastructure (rivers, streams, and other waterbodies). • Table 4 Biodiversity (1st column, pg. 40), refers to UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP), however, the UK BAP has been superseded. The 2024 UK Biodiversity Framework replaces the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework, which itself succeeded the UK BAP and 'Conserving Biodiversity – the UK Approach'. This needs to be updated. • Table 4 Biodiversity (1st column, pg. 43), the section includes details of potential impacts on the wider green infrastructure network, however, we consider it would be appropriate to also mention blue infrastructure, in terms of potential impacts on rivers, streams and other waterbodies. Impacts include (but are not limited to) changes in water flows and levels, particularly from water abstraction. • Table 4 Biodiversity (2nd column, pg. 39), states “Although designated sites are afforded protection; however, this is unlikely to prevent some decline in condition due to the effects of climate change.” We consider that this could be clearer, as it is not just climate change that will lead 	<p>Definitions have been added to Table 4-3 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>Reference in Table 4-3 of the AoS Report has been updated.</p> <p>Information on Green Infrastructure added to Table 4-3 of the AoS Report. Note the NPS approach to Green and Blue Infrastructure is detailed in Section 5.11 of EN-1.</p> <p>Combining effects added to Table 4-3 of the AoS Report.</p>
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	<p>to decline in condition of designated sites. It does not address the combining impacts from increased development and climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 4 Biodiversity (3rd column, pg. 40, states “The NPS should explore opportunities for new habitat creation and enhancement associated with energy developments, e.g. through the use of appropriate locally native species in landscaping plans.” Natural England considers that the NPS should be more ambitious in line with the UK Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, which sets out that it “is not so much about “balancing” energy and the environmental needs; it’s about integrating them. It’s about rebuilding our natural infrastructure at the same time as building the new energy infrastructure we need.” • Table 4 Biodiversity (3rd column, pg. 40). Natural England recommends inclusion of reference to integration with the Local Nature Recovery Strategies/ Nature Recovery Networks. • Table 4 Biodiversity (3rd column, pg. 40). Natural England considers that generally Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and the requirement for a MCZ Assessment and the application of Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) have not been given sufficient weight as a component of the Marine Protected Area (MPA) network. • Table 4 Geodiversity, it should be noted that some SSSIs are also part of active quarry sites, and there is a potential link between new development and the need for further quarried resource for development. • Table 4 Greenhouse gas emissions (3rd column, pg. 47), states “The NPS should also ensure that opportunities are taken for maximising tree cover, where practical.” Natural England highlights that implementing the right solution in the right location is critical. For 	<p>The NPS (EN-1 Section 2) sets out how Clean Power 2030 Action Plan will help to shape the approach to the development of energy infrastructure – see EN-1</p> <p>Information added to Table 4-3 within the AoS Report.</p> <p>The NPS notes that as a matter of policy, MCZ and MEEB should be given the same protection as sites under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (see EN-1 section 5).</p> <p>Information added to the Geodiversity section of Table 4-3 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>EN-5 notes that in relation to landscape schemes that comprise off site tree and hedgerow planting, advice</p>
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	<p>example, planting trees on peatlands is usually damaging and counterproductive. Appropriate tree planting in the right location can provide significant opportunities for contributing to net zero. Within developments, well-placed and well-chosen trees on streets and in urban spaces can provide a range of benefits including reducing noise and excessive heat and supporting sustainable drainage. However, depending on the site, there could be other approaches, such as peat restoration, which would also contribute to carbon sequestration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 4 Adaptation to a changing climate (3rd column, 51), refers specifically to tree planting only. Natural England encourages reference to wider Nature-Based Solutions (NbS). NbS reduce risks to people from climate change, for example Natural Flood Management (NFM) and urban cooling from green infrastructure. Green and blue infrastructure is a way to deliver NbS. The Natural Environment PPG notes that: “Green infrastructure can contribute to carbon storage, cooling and shading, opportunities for species migration to more suitable habitats and the protection of water quality and other natural resources. It can also be an integral part of multifunctional sustainable drainage and natural flood risk management.” • Table 4 Adaptation to a changing climate. Natural England considers that this section should also consider water resources, in the context of drought, as well as flooding. • Table 4 Water environment (3rd column, pg. 56), Natural England considers that this section could be widened to not only focus on pollution, but also water availability and management. • Table 4 Soil and Contaminated Land (3rd column, pg. 60). Natural England welcomes the emphasis on avoiding building on greenfield land. Natural England considers that this could also be further 	<p>should be sought from relevant statutory authorities on scheme design and species mix. Detail added to tree planting in Table 4-3 of the AoS Report. Note is also made in the AoS Report that although not specifically noted in EN-5, it is considered by the AoS that obtaining advice from the relevant statutory authority on the design of schemes, including selection of species mix, will help ensure that appropriate tree planting in the right location (e.g. avoiding peatlands), can be achieved.</p> <p>Information on NBS added to Table 4-3 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>Note is made in EN-1 (section 5) that applicants need to understand the effects of climate change on water resources and this is also noted in the AoS Report (section 5).</p>
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	<p>enhanced by highlighting the opportunities for improved soil management. All soils store carbon, with the amount stored largely depending on soil type and management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 4 Landscapes, waterscapes and townscape (3rd column, pg. 64). Natural England notes reference to improving landscape through tree planting. Natural England promotes that implementing the right solution in the right location is critical, and this will be dependent on the proposed aims of landscape restoration in the local area. 	<p>Note is made in the NPS (section 5) that applicants are encouraged to develop and implement soil management plans and this is also noted in the AoS.</p> <p>Consideration of water availability and management added to Table 4-3 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>Information on opportunities for soil improvement added to Table 4-3 of the AoS report.</p> <p>Information added on the location of planting to Table 4-2 of the AoS Report. Note is made in the NPS of tree planting in the context of Local Nature Recovery Strategies.</p>
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	<p><i>4. Are there any changes you consider should be made to the proposed AoS objectives and guide questions?</i></p> <p>Natural England would like to see the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On page 83, Objective 2: Questions should look for the use of nature-based solutions more widely, not just in relation to flooding and coastal erosion. • On page 84, Objective 3 should include blue infrastructure as well as green infrastructure. • On page 84, Objective 3 should include reference to Local Nature Recovery Strategies alongside nature recovery networks. • On page 84, Objective 3 should include reference to irreplaceable habitats, alongside priority habitats. • On page 85, Objective 3: Expand the question about reducing or avoiding impacts to habitats with important roles in carbon sequestration, to include enabling restoration of such habitats to store more carbon and prevent its release. • On page 85, Objective 4 – compensation sites (created where plans/projects result in Adverse Effects on Site Integrity of Habitat Sites) are afforded the same level of protection as other Habitat Sites, under the Habitats Regulations and should be referred to specifically. The mitigation hierarchy should be applied. • On page 86, Objective 6 should include reference to furthering the purpose of landscape designations, to align with the changes that came about following the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (detailed above). 	<p>Objective 3 deals with enhancing biodiversity and ecological networks and it is inherent that this would also include for nature based solutions. Wider use of nature based solutions are also addressed via Objective 1.</p> <p>Note is now made of Blue infrastructure and included in EN-1.</p> <p>The NPS notes Local Nature Recovery Strategies (see EN-1) and notes reference should be made to these. The AoS considers these as part of the assessment.</p> <p>Note is now made of irreplaceable habitats and is addressed in EN-1.</p> <p>The need to protect most significant landscapes is addressed in the NPS via section 5 and considered in the AoS.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 88, Objective 11 refers to loss of access, but Natural England considers that it is not clear what this is referring to. Paragraphs 105, 185, 187 and 193 of the NPPF highlight the importance of public rights of way and access. Potential impacts on access land, common land, rights of way and coastal access routes should be considered. Consideration should also be given to the potential impacts on any nearby National Trails. The King Charles III England Coast Path (KCIIIIECP) is a National Trail around the English Coast. It has an associated coastal margin subject to public access rights. Parts of the KCIIIIECP are not on Public Rights of Way but are subject to public access rights. Consideration should be given to the impact of any development on the KCIIIIECP and the benefits of maintaining a continuous coastal route. On page 88, Objective 11 – should include promotion of access to nature for people and improving/ increasing local green infrastructure access. 	<p>Note is made in the NPS that the GHG Reduction Strategy should consider the creation and preservation of carbon stores and sinks including through woodland creation, hedgerow creation and restoration, peatland restoration and through other natural habitats. This is also considered in the AoS.</p> <p>The issue of compensation sites is considered in the HRA.</p> <p>Note is made in the NPS (section 5) of the importance of Public Rights of Way. This is also considered in the AoS. The national scale of the NPS does not allow for referencing of specific features.</p> <p>Promotion of access to nature is addressed in the NPS via section 5 and is considered within the AoS.</p>
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	<p><i>5. Do you have further suggestions regarding the scope of the AoS and its proposed assessment of the reviewed NPS?</i></p> <p>Natural England has the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what other plans and programmes are included in the in-combination/cumulative assessment • Recognise the importance of an iterative AoS – with assessors and those preparing the NPS working together • Set out how alternatives will be identified and assessed <p>Natural England would be happy to be involved in discussion on these three points.</p>	<p>Details in relation to these points are included under Cumulative effects in-combination with other plans and policies in Section 9, Introduction in Chapter 5, 6 and 7, and Appraisal of Alternatives in Section 2.</p>
Welsh Government	<p><i>1. Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the AoS process?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales, p20: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act 2024 ○ Environmental Noise (Wales) Regulations 2006 • p. 15, National / Air Quality: National Emission Ceilings Regulations 2018 • p. 21 There is no section for 'Air Quality' under the 'Wales' heading, as there is for England and Scotland. Items to include under a Wales / Air Quality heading include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act 2024 	<p>Additional documents noted and added to the Review of Plans and Policies in Appendix C – no additional AoS Themes identified and considered that amendments to AoS Framework are not required.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Air Quality Standards (Wales) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Air Quality Standards (Wales) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. ○ The National Air Quality Strategy for Wales (The Clean Air Plan: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales) • p. 56 The Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act 2024 includes duties to set an air quality target for PM2.5 and a long-term target in respect of one of the following pollutants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ammonia; (b) PM10; (c) ground level ozone; (d) nitrogen dioxide; (e) carbon monoxide; (f) sulphur dioxide. 	
	<p><i>2. Is there additional information that needs to be considered as part of the baseline data?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet Areas formally designated under the Environmental Noise (Wales) Regulations 2006 • Smoke control areas - Wales • p. 33 Air Quality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Distribution of air pollutant emissions (The UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI)) 	<p>Additional data has been noted and added to the Baseline Data in Appendix B. Due to the scale at which the mapping in Appendix F is presented and that it does not allow for the full granularity of data of relevance, this additional data has not been added to the figures.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Air quality zones (compliance data, compliance assessment reporting) • p. 35 Table 2, Air Quality: Air quality zones (compliance map) 	
	<p><i>3: Do you consider that the range of sustainability problems and issues covered is appropriate?</i></p> <p>The key issues list seems appropriate given this is very high-level and cuts across all the energy NPS's.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
	<p><i>4: Are there any changes you consider should be made to the proposed AoS objectives and guide questions?</i></p> <p>AoS objectives seem appropriate.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
	<p><i>5: Do you have further suggestions regarding the scope of the AoS and its proposed assessment of the reviewed NPS?</i></p> <p>There could be greater recognition of the importance of optimising the use of marine space and use of marine natural resources including through supporting co-location opportunities.</p>	<p>Issues relating to co-location and / or clustering are noted in the NPS and assessed in the AoS. Of particular note see Section 9 cumulative and transboundary effects.</p>

<p>Historic England</p>	<p><i>1. Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the AoS process?</i></p> <p>Historic England is satisfied with the plans, programmes and environmental objectives reviewed except for reference to The Heritage Statement 2017 (page 15). This document was updated in 2018 as The Heritage Statement: One Year On. As it was published over six years ago, it's advisable to consult more recent publications or official sources for the latest updates and initiatives in heritage policy.</p>	<p>Policy updated in the AoS Report and within Appendix C.</p>
	<p><i>2. Is there additional information that needs to be considered as part of the baseline data?</i></p> <p>Historic England has no substantive comments to make but would suggest amending the following,</p> <p>Table 1 Summary of national baseline information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes heritage coasts against Historic Environment (page 32). A heritage coast is defined by agreement between the relevant maritime local authorities and Natural England who support the heritage coasts in a variety of ways. Whilst heritage coasts will contain historic assets which will need to be considered, we suggest they are listed under the Landscape, Townscape, and Seascape topic area. • in the Flood Risk and Coastal Change topic (page 33) the reference should be to Shoreline Management Plans not marine spatial plans. <p>Table 2 Key designations and land use across the UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This table has omitted listed buildings at Figure 3: Historic Environment (page 35). These should be included. 	<p>Receptor moved under Landscape in Table 4-1 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>Receptor updated in Table 4-1 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>Information added to the baseline table within Appendix D on HERs and</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We also recommend including reference to Historic Environment Records (HERs). HERs are information services that provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the archaeology and historic built environment of a defined geographic area. They contain details on local archaeological sites and finds, historic buildings and historic landscapes and are regularly updated. This information is usually held in a database with a digital mapping system (Geographic Information System). There are over 80 HERs in England which are maintained and managed by local authorities as the essential core of historic environment services. Whilst not currently a statutory duty Section 230 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act makes provision for HERs to be given a statutory status and requiring local authorities to maintain HERs. We therefore consider it appropriate for the AoS to reference HERs. More details on HERs can be found here. 	<p>links to detailed sources provided.</p> <p>Due to the scale at which the mapping in Appendix F is presented, it does not allow for the full granularity of data of relevance, therefore listed buildings have not been added to the figure.</p>
	<p><i>3. Do you consider that the range of sustainability problems and issues covered is appropriate?</i></p> <p>Historic England is satisfied with the sustainability problems and issues identified in the framework.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
	<p><i>4. Are there any changes you consider should be made to the proposed AoS objectives and guide questions?</i></p> <p>Historic England suggests the inclusion of an additional guide question at Table 1 – AoS Framework for Energy NPS, Objective 5 Protect and enhance</p>	<p>The issue of archiving is addressed in the NPS, which notes that the applicant is encouraged, where opportunities exist, to prepare proposals which can make a positive contribution to the</p>

	<p>cultural heritage assets and their settings, and the wider historic environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure the completion of archiving responsibilities in accordance with best practice. 	<p>historic environment, and to consider how their scheme takes account of the significance of heritage assets affected. This can include considering where required the development of archive capacity which could deliver significant public benefits. This requirement is noted in the AoS Report – see section 5.</p>
	<p><i>5. Do you have further suggestions regarding the scope of the AoS and its proposed assessment of the reviewed NPS?</i></p> <p>No comment.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Northern Ireland (DAERA)</p>	<p>DAERA note that it was not consulted on the screening report.</p> <p>DAERA would like the SEA Environmental Report to contain a clear statement indicating the opinion about whether or not the implementation of the of the NPS Appraisal is likely to have a significant effect on Northern Ireland, in combination with any identified measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment.</p>	<p>Noted – as this AoS is concerned with an update to an NPS that was the subject of a previous AoS, no additional screening was carried out.</p> <p>Note is made in the AoS Report, in relation to the Geographical Scope, that the</p>

	<p>DAERA notes the inclusion of the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland on page 23 of the scoping report, please note that this has not actually been adopted yet.</p> <p>DAERA notes that Appendices are named differently on the actual documents, in which they are named Volumes 1 and 2 (assuming these are Appendix A and B).</p> <p>Further, in relation to the baseline information within the report it mentions an Appendix C however this has not been supplied.</p> <p>DAERA notes that whilst information and comments have been made with regard to baseline data in environmental receptors there has not been any information given in respect of the interrelationships between environmental receptors, DAERA recommends this is addressed within the Environmental Report.</p> <p>DAERA notes that regarding the plan's objectives; no targets or indicators have been provided. Alongside the objectives of the plan, targets and indicators should be provided within the Environmental Report.</p> <p>DAERA note from within Pages 90 and 91 that alternatives will be detailed in the in the next stage. DAERA looks forward to reviewing these as part of the Environmental Report.</p>	<p>Energy NPSs do not apply to Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Issues relating to references noted.</p> <p>Baseline information is contained within Appendix D to the AoS Report.</p> <p>Issues and Opportunities are addressed in Section 4 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>An assessment of alternatives is set out in Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the AoS Report.</p>
	<p>Natural Environment Division Comments</p> <p>Issues arising from this plan should be considered as part of the forthcoming SEA including the potential disturbance to/impact on NI migratory/mobile species. Designated sites, European sites in Northern Ireland adjacent to or with pathways to/from Great Britain, priority habitats, and other landscape types also require special attention as ecological functionality and 'views' of</p>	<p>The Energy NPSs do not apply to Northern Ireland and as such, no direct effects are noted. Potential for transboundary effects are</p>

	<p>landscape cross boundaries. The SEA should consider all potential impacts including those which may impact Northern Ireland both directly and indirectly. Consideration should be given to all potential impacts on NI habitats (particularly designated sites, priority habitats and those important for migratory species and NI populations) including habitat quality and conservation status.</p> <p>NED notes that the scoping report and Appendix A (Volume 1) contains a list of Relevant Plans and Programs. NED advises that the table would benefit from the inclusion of a number of additional plans and programs. These are provided at the end of the NED response. NED advise that details on any relevant conflicts and/or synergies between this plans objectives and the objectives of other plans and programs should be identified and described within the Environmental Report.</p> <p>NED note and welcome that all SEA topics have been scoped into the SEA assessment. As discussed, NED would welcome Northern Irish issues being included within the Environmental Report either within a dedicated section or as part of the overall assessment. NED would welcome maps where appropriate and details on any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information. NED also advise that other areas of the assessment should be cognisant of Northern Irish issues such as but not limited to mitigation and monitoring.</p> <p>It may be worth including in your considerations the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 (as amended) • Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) 2011 • The Environmental Improvement Plan for Northern Ireland 	<p>addressed in Section 9 of the AoS Report.</p> <p>Effects on migratory species are addressed in the HRA Report.</p> <p>The plans and policies identified have been added to Appendix C.</p> <p>The AoS Report notes that potential effects have been considered across a range of geographic scales (including international, UK, regional and local). As noted in the AoS Report, Appendix D is supported by a range of figures set out in Appendix E which show the geographical distribution of some of the key designations and land uses across England and Wales. Table 4-2 provides a summary of the data presented on these figures.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) • The Environment (NI) Order 2002 • The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 • The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) for Northern Ireland • Planning Policy Statements (PPS – in particular PPS2 and PPS18). It should be noted that the PPS's will be superseded by Local Development Plans when they are adopted. • Biodiversity Strategy for NI to 2020 https://www.daerani.gov.uk/publications/biodiversity-strategy-northern-ireland-2020-0 • Draft Environment Strategy https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/esni-publicdiscussion-document • The Draft NI peatland policy: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/nipeatland-strategy-consultation. • The Draft Green Growth Strategy Consultation on the draft Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk) • Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 2050 Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 2050 Department for the Economy (economy-ni.gov.uk) <p>DAERA have a map browser for NI protected sites and known priority habitat: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/natural-environment-map-viewer</p>	<p>Note that mapping is available and has been considered for Scotland and Northern Ireland, but due to size it is not provided.</p>
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	<p>A number of useful information sources that highlight the current state of the environment in Northern Ireland at a regional level and which could be referenced are:</p> <p>Northern Ireland State of the Environment Reports: https://www.daerani.gov.uk/publications/state-environment-report-2013</p>	
	<p>Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Reports: https://www.daerani.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-environmental-statistics-report</p> <p>Other relevant web-links are;</p> <p>Designated Scientific Sites: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/protected-areas</p> <p>Regional Landscape Character Map viewer: https://www.daerani.gov.uk/services/regional-landscape-character-areas-map-viewer</p> <p>DAERA have a map browser for NI protected sites and known priority habitat: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/natural-environment-map-viewer</p> <p>Our natural environment datasets are available at the link below: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/download-digital-datasets</p> <p>Appropriate Assessments should refer to the status of habitats and species in the relevant reports available on the JNCC website as follows: UK Article 17 report for the Habitats Directive https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/article-17-habitats-directivereport-2019/ and the UK Article 12 report for the Birds</p>	<p>Sources have been considered and used to add information in Appendix D where appropriate.</p>

	<p>Directive https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/european-reporting/#birds-directive-reporting</p>	
	<p>Air quality and biodiversity unit</p> <p><i>Question 1: Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the AoS process?</i></p> <p>Energy NPS Update AoS Scoping Document</p> <p>Recommend including in the ‘Northern Ireland’ section on p23 the following:</p> <p>Under ‘Cross – thematic’:</p> <p>The Environmental Improvement Plan for Northern Ireland</p> <p>New section:</p> <p>Biodiversity and Conservation:</p> <p>The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended)</p> <p>The Environment (NI) Order 2002 (as amended)</p> <p>The Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 (as amended)</p>	<p>Plan added to Appendix C under the ‘Cross-Thematic’ subsection.</p> <p>Legislation added to Appendix C.</p>

	<p>Marine and Fisheries Division - Marine Plan Team</p> <p>The MPT reviewed the Energy NPS Appraisal of Sustainability Scoping Report. It is recommended that consideration is given to including reference to the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 under the Review of Policies, Plans and Programmes section.</p>	Policy added to Appendix C.
	<p>Marine and Fisheries Division - Marine Conservation Branch</p> <p>We welcome the included legislation, plans, programmes and Environmental Protection Objectives, however, also advise considering the following for transboundary considerations, Summary of PPP reviewed – Northern Ireland (page 23):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2026 • Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment • OSPAR agreement <p>And the inclusion of the following legislation under the Marine Environment section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the WANE Act) • The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 • The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 • The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 	Legislation, policies and plans identified have been considered and added to Appendix C.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Environmental Liability (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009</u> <p>The following strategies and plans should also be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Environment Strategy NI • Marine Plan for Northern Ireland 2025 • Northern Ireland Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) Strategy Review 2025 • Northern Ireland Blue carbon Strategy 2025 • Northern Ireland seabird strategy (consultation draft) • Northern Ireland elasmobranch strategy (consultation draft) <p>We agree there is a potential for designated sites to be affected by proposals in the NPS (page 39). These should also include NI waters.</p> <p>We would welcome sight to the separate HRA process for Energy NPS.</p>	
Nature Scot	<p><i>1: Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the AoS process?</i></p> <p>It is unclear from reading the Appraisal document which aspects will apply to Scotland to therefore advise on which legislation, programmes or plans to indicate therefore the authors must content themselves that this has been checked and relevant consideration provided. Liaison with Scottish Government could provide relevant lists e.g. from the recent SEA of National planning framework (NPF4) and the ongoing work relating to the Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind or the National Marine Plan (NMP2). The current lists on pages 21-22 appear to be largely terrestrial focused. There is</p>	<p>Applicable legislation, programmes and plans across a range of topics are included in Appendix C. Geographical coverage of the NPS is set out in EN-1 and addressed in section 3 of the AoS Report.</p>

	<p>also no mention of NESO and the SSEP and RSEPs in the main document – they may be mentioned in the appendix.</p>	<p>The role of NESO and its responsibilities is set out in section 2 of EN-1.</p>
	<p><i>2: Is there additional information that needs to be considered as part of the baseline data?</i></p> <p>Not listed from a Scottish biodiversity perspective:</p> <p>World Heritage Sites (Flow Country and St Kilda; Priority Marine Features (PMFs); research and demonstration MPAs (Fair Isle)</p> <p>Not listed from a Scottish communities supporting infrastructure – tidal stream, hydro, pumped storage hydro, onshore wind, wave, strategic shipping lanes.</p> <p>NMPi the marine data portal managed by Scottish Government may provide useful background data layers</p>	<p>World Heritage Sites (including St Kilda and Flow Country) and MPAs are included in the baseline data table Appendix D. Reference to Priority Marine Features has been added.</p> <p>Note that due to the spatial scale of the NPS, it is not possible to detail all local information.</p>
	<p><i>3: Do you consider that the range of sustainability problems and issues covered is appropriate?</i></p> <p>Biodiversity – European sites – we will provide further comment as and when we see the HRA – which we only request to see if there are identified adverse impacts to Scottish sites and features.</p> <p>Scotland has recently published a Delivery Plan for the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy[1]</p>	<p>Noted – a separate HRA Report has been developed to consider potential for impact on relevant ‘habitats sites’.</p> <p>Plan identified has been added to Appendix C.</p>

	<p>Consideration should also be given to HPAI and the ongoing effects of climate change contraction and expansion of species ranges.</p> <p>Soil and contaminated land – need to consider the potential risk from non-removal of assets at end of life in the marine environment.</p> <p>Economic Activity – the Scottish Government has produced the Blue Economy Vision for Scotland [2] with an emphasis on a just transition, further consideration around this may be appropriate in a UK context.</p> <p>[1] https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-biodiversity-delivery-plan-20242030/</p> <p>[2] https://www.gov.scot/publications/blue-economy-vision-scotland/</p>	<p>The AoS considers the decommissioning stage of infrastructure.</p> <p>These Plans have been included in Appendix C.</p>
	<p><i>4: Are there any changes you consider should be made to the proposed AoS objectives and guide questions?</i></p> <p>1 and 2 Suggest an addition aspect regarding the protection of peatland and blue carbon stores where possible. This could also fall into the second objective and in either case could be worded as management t and protection of existing peatland and blue carbon sores so as to maximise sequestration of carbon.</p> <p>3 – habitats with roles in carbon sequestration is mentioned and the link to points 1 and 2 above should be clear . Needs clear reference to World Heritage Sites (Flow Country and St Kilda) where applicable in Scotland</p> <p>4 Suggest another option would be to: Support the UK national site network through the delivery of compensation measures through plan level, strategic and project specific compensation (including mitigation and nature positive</p>	<p>Noted – issues relating to preservation of carbon stores and sinks including through woodland creation, hedgerow creation and restoration, peatland restoration and through other natural habitats are set out in EN-1 and considered in the AoS.</p> <p>Note is made of Scottish World Heritage Sites, including Flow Country and St Kilda) in Appendix D.</p>

	<p>enhancement) in the context of increasing marine and terrestrial ecosystem resiliencies. Needs clear reference to World Heritage Sites (Flow Country and St Kilda) where applicable in Scotland</p> <p>5 - no comment</p> <p>6 – no comment</p> <p>7 Add - Manage and minimise anthropogenic noise in the marine environment.</p> <p>8 – no comment.</p> <p>9 Add - Consider and adapt techniques to enable the removal of assets in the marine environment at the end of life. There should be clear reference here to sustainable management of peat and carbon rich soils</p> <p>10 – Reference to Geological Conservation Review sites in Scotland where applicable</p> <p>11 – no comment</p> <p>12 Add - Encourage the transition of marine vessel traffic to low carbon options where feasible.</p> <p>13 Add– Encourage just transition job opportunities</p> <p>14 – No comment</p>	<p>Consideration of the UK national site network is made in the NPS, AoS and HRA.</p> <p>Noise and vibration (including in the marine environment) is addressed in section 5.12 of EN-1 and addressed in the AoS Report.</p> <p>The requirement for decommissioning of infrastructure is set out in the NPS and also considered in the AoS.</p> <p>Consideration of the need for sustainable transport (including maritime and inland waterways), as well as support for the use of alternative fuels is set out in EN-1.</p> <p>Note is made in EN-1 of the potential requirement for approval by the local authority of an employment and skills plan detailing arrangements to promote local employment and skills development</p>
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		opportunities, including apprenticeships, education, engagement with local schools and colleges and training programmes to be enacted.
	<p><i>5: Do you have further suggestions regarding the scope of the AoS and its proposed assessment of the reviewed NPS?</i></p> <p>It would be helpful signpost exactly where there are likely to be impacts to Scottish interests.</p>	Geographical coverage of the NPS is set out in EN-1 and is noted in the AoS Report.
Natural Resources Wales	<p>Whilst the Scoping Report does include a number of considerations which we welcome, there are some further considerations which we recommend that the AoS should consider, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refer to duties set out in Section 6 of the Environment (Wales Act) 2016 • Planning Policy Wales direction to steer development proposals away from statutory designated sites, sites containing protected species and habitats, which are irreplaceable, as location in these areas is unacceptable • the concept of Net Biodiversity Benefit and stepwise approach contained in Planning Policy Wales • the approach adopted in the extant Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004) which categorises a power station as highly vulnerable development and this development should 	<p>Noted. The NPS and AoS Report have considered the points raised.</p> <p>Habitats sites are addressed in the HRA Report.</p> <p>Biodiversity matters (including Net Biodiversity Benefit) are addressed in Section 5 of EN-1 and are subject to a number of AoS Objectives.</p> <p>Flood risk, climate change, water resources, dark skies and coastal processes are</p>

	<p>not be permitted in Zone C2 of the development advice map (undefended flood risk areas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up-to-date plans, policies and legislation relevant to Wales for topics including climate change, water abstraction and marine • additional baseline data, for example tranquillity and dark sky reserves, and water supply or availability • clarity on AoS objectives and guide questions, for example coastal erosion and adaption, and water supply or availability 	<p>also addressed in EN-1 Section 5 and considered via the AoS.</p>
	<p><i>Question 1: Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the Appraisal of Sustainability process?</i></p> <p>Table 1 - Key Plans, Policies and Legislation - National (United Kingdom) (Volume 1)</p> <p><i>The Third National Adaptation Programme 3 (page 47)</i></p> <p>The Appraisal of Sustainability (AoS) should be much more explicit on the implications of the National Adaptation Programme (NAP) for the National Policy Statement (NPS), for example the AoS should consider how adaptation measures within the NAP can be supported.</p> <p><i>Climate Change: Second national adaptation programme (2018-2023) (page 48)</i></p> <p>It is not clear why superseded plans and programmes are also referenced in the AoS. For example, it references the UK National Adaptation Plan 2, in</p>	<p>Detail added to Appendix C NAP3 row.</p> <p>Noted. The AoS Report has detailed those plans and policies considered relevant to applicable AoS topics. In some instances this may have</p>

	<p>certain sections and the current NAP3 elsewhere. The AoS should reference the current plans and programmes.</p> <p><i>Water Environment, UK (pages 53-61)</i></p> <p>We recommend that the following be reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Water Resources (Abstraction and Impounding) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 (England and Wales) • Water Act 2003 • The Water Abstraction and Impounding (Exemptions) Regulations 2017 <p><i>Marine, UK (pages 53-61)</i></p> <p>In table 2 key plans, policies and legislation should refer to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond 2030 and other relevant grid connection planning such as Future Energy Scenarios published by National Energy Systems Operator • Plans adopted, or soon to be adopted by the Crown Estate, such as Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4, Offshore Wind Leasing Round 5, Offshore wind extension projects 2017 and Offshore Wind Test and Demonstration Opportunity 	<p>included superseded plans and programmes, though this is noted where applicable.</p> <p>Policies have been added to Appendix C.</p> <p>Policies and plans have been added to Appendix C.</p>
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<p>Table 2 - Key Plans, Policies and Legislation - Regional (England, Wales, Northern Ireland & Scotland) (Volume 1)</p> <p><i>Noise and Soundscape (pages 108-131)</i></p> <p>We recommend the inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welsh Government Noise and Soundscape Plan for Wales 2023 to 2028 <p><i>Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (page 110)</i></p> <p>While there is consideration of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and well-being goals, the following sources may be useful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Well-being of Future Generations - doing things differently Wellbeing of Wales: national indicators: Data and summaries for each of the national well-being indicators <p><i>Planning Policy Wales (page 111)</i></p> <p>Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11, 2021 has been updated with PPW Edition 12, February 2024 and this should be reflected in the AoS.</p> <p><i>Technical Advice Notes (pages 116-117)</i></p> <p>We recommend that TAN 14: Coastal Planning (March 1998) is added to list of Technical Advice Notes (TANs) as it is likely to be relevant to the consideration of energy projects.</p> <p>While reference is made to the revised TAN 15 i.e. Technical Advice Note 15 Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion 2021 this has not yet been implemented. Reference should instead be made to the extant TAN 15:</p>	<p>Policies and plans have been added to Appendix C.</p> <p>Policies and plans have been updated in Appendix C.</p>
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	<p>Development and Flood Risk (2004) until the Welsh Government publishes and implements its update to TAN 15.</p> <p><i>The Climate Strategy for Wales (page 119)</i></p> <p>The Climate Change Strategy for Wales 2010 has been superseded long ago by the Net Zero Plan 2021 and Climate Conscious Wales 2019, which are both included on subsequent pages.</p> <p><i>Prosperity for All: A Climate Conscious Wales (2019) (page 122)</i></p> <p>A notable omission is that there is no coverage of the Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales 2024, and this strategy has superseded Climate Conscious Wales 2019, which is included.</p> <p><i>Climate Change (pages 120-122)</i></p> <p>The following regulations should be considered for inclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change regulations for Wales 2021 The Climate Change (Wales) Regulations 2021: integrated impact assessment [HTML] GOV.WALES <p><i>Waste (page 123)</i></p> <p>We welcome the reference made to the Waste (Miscellaneous Provisions)(Wales) Regulations 2012, and the separate collection requirements. These have subsequently been supplemented by the Waste Separation Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2025</p> <p>We also note that other national strategies are mentioned for other themes, so we recommend including ‘Beyond Recycling’, the Welsh Governments updated waste strategy, published in 2021</p>	
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	<p><i>Heritage (pages 125-126)</i></p> <p>We recommend the inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government 2018 Ministers Priorities for the Historic Environment • remove reference to the Historic Environment Action Plan 2010 <p><i>Water Environment (pages 126-129)</i></p> <p>We recommend the inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of Strategic Resource Areas for Tidal Stream Energy (January 2025) GOV.WALES • Implementation Guidance that provides detailed information about how to comply with planning policies within the Welsh National Marine Plan (page 127) • The Water Resources (Control of agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021 (as amended) <p><i>Landscape (page 129)</i></p> <p>We recommend the inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government's Biodiversity deep dive: recommendations [HTML] GOV.WALES <p><i>Energy (page 130)</i></p> <p>We recommend the inclusion of:</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decarbonisation of industry and business (summary) [HTML] GOV.WALES 2024 • Energy generation in Wales: 2023 GOV.WALES • Challenges and Opportunities of decarbonising Wales' energy system by 2035, WCPPPO1.pdf 2023 	
	<p><i>Question 2: Is there additional information that needs to be considered as part of the baseline data?</i></p> <p>Baseline Data and contextual information (Volume 1, Pages 152-362)</p> <p><i>Biodiversity (pages 159-180)</i></p> <p>We refer you to Section 7 of the Environment Act (Wales) 2016 that lists living organisms and types of habitats, which are of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales.</p> <p><i>Tranquillity (pages 215-216)</i></p> <p>We recommend the inclusion of the latest Tranquillity and Place evidence for Wales, which can be found at Tranquillity & Place Sound Environment Part I DataMapWales</p> <p><i>Dark Sky Reserves (pages 216-217)</i></p> <p>We also refer you to the most recent Dark Skies mapping for Wales that can be found at Dark Skies Map for Natural Resources Wales LUC</p> <p><i>Water Quality and Resources, Water Framework Directive (pages 222-228)</i></p>	<p>Noted and additional data and policies/plans have been added to Appendix C or D where appropriate.</p>

	<p>The baseline data for Wales has been replaced with 2024 WFD Interim Classification data, which was published on 13 March 2025. Groundwater data has not yet changed as this is reviewed every 6 years.</p> <p><i>Water Quality and Resources (pages 222-237)</i></p> <p>Certain forms of energy technologies are likely to require a sufficient supply of water to operate. However, there is limited reference to information contained in relevant plans and programmes and infrastructure relating to drought risk, water availability, wastewater and water supply. We recommend the following sources of information for review and inclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • license strategies (CAMS) https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/what-we-do/ourroles-and-responsibilities/water/water-available-in-our-catchments/?lang=en • water company drought plans Draft Drought Plan 2025 Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water Drought plan Water Resource Planning Plan and strategy About us HD Cymru • Water company water resources management plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water Final Water Resources Management Plan (2024) ○ Hafren Dyfrdwr Water Resources Management Plan • Water company drainage and waste management plans (England and Wales) • Drainage and wastewater management plan (action plan), Wales • Welsh Government Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs) Guiding Principles 	<p>Water Resources are considered in Section 5.16 of the NPS and notes the requirement for applicants to consider how these might change due to climate change. Note is also made that applicants should make early contact with the Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales and water companies with their proposed water requirements to understand whether water is available. If insufficient water is available for abstraction the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales will not be unable to authorise an abstraction licence.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies, Wales • Natural Resources Wales and Water Companies drought plans <p><i>Flood Risk and Coastal Change (page 229-233)</i></p> <p>The TAN15 Defended Zone in Wales are defined as areas that benefit from Risk Management Authority flood defences with the following minimum Standard of Protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 100 years (present day) for rivers • 1 in 200 years (present day) for the sea <p>For flood defences built from 2016 onwards there must be an allowance for climate change and design freeboard.</p> <p>For planning purposes, surface water and small watercourses are categorised differently in Wales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Water and Small Watercourses – Flood Zone 2 Areas with 0.1% to 1% (1 in 1000 to 1 in 100) chance of flooding from surface water and/or small watercourses in a given year, including the effects of climate change • Surface Water and Small Watercourses – Flood Zone 3 Areas with more than 1% (1 in 100) chance of flooding from surface water and/or small watercourses in a given year, including the effects of climate change <p>Further information on ‘what do the map layers mean’ can be found in the hyperlink: Natural Resources Wales/Flood map for planning/development advice map</p>	<p>Issues relating to Flood Risk are detailed in EN-1 Section 5.</p> <p>The baseline contained in Appendix D of the AoS Report notes how surface water etc., is categorised in Wales.</p>
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	<p>Please also be aware that the Environment Agency in England refer to the ‘functional floodplain’ as their high risk area (>1 in 30), which is not in use in Wales.</p> <p>The figures provided for numbers of properties at risk in Wales are currently valid and correct. However, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are due to release new figures in April/May. The AoS should consider this update.</p> <p><i>Marine (pages 233 – 234)</i></p> <p>Consideration should be made to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Welsh Government, with support from NRW and the Joint Nature Conservation Company (JNCC), are currently working with a task and finish group of marine stakeholders to identify a small number of possible Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) within Welsh waters • further information can be found on the Welsh Government’s webpage including FAQs, information on the Areas of Search and other communication tools. Welsh Government with NRW and JNCC support, will draft boundaries of possible MCZs which will then be subject to a public consultation. We recommend you should consider how these certain outputs from this work may be relevant in the proposed review of NPSs (contact: Leanne.Llewellyn@gov.wales, Welsh Government Biodiversity Branch) 	<p>Noted. While it is likely these figures will not be available for this iteration of the NPS and AoS, it is the intention that the NPS will be reviewed regularly. EN-1 notes it is expected an announcement on the consideration as to whether a review is required should be made at least every 5 years. Up to date baseline data will be considered at the applicable time.</p>
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	<p><i>Question 3: Do you consider that the range of sustainability problems and issues covered is appropriate?</i></p> <p>AoS Scoping Report, Table 4 - Key issues and opportunities (pages 39-81)</p> <p><i>Biodiversity (pages 39-46)</i></p> <p>Net Benefit Biodiversity</p> <p>Reference is made to the concept for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). However, PPW promotes Net Biodiversity Benefit (NBB). NBB is the concept that development should leave biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems in a significantly better state than before through securing immediate and long-term, measurable and demonstrable benefit, primarily on or immediately adjacent to the site. It is based on a qualitative approach that emphasises proactive consideration of biodiversity and wider ecosystems resilience that is embedded in a placemaking context early in the design process. The Diversity, Extent, Condition, Connectivity and Aspects of ecosystem resilience (DECCA) framework for evaluating ecosystems resilience based on the attributes of diversity, extent, condition, connectivity and adaptability must also be taken into account.</p> <p>The application of the stepwise approach (set out in section 6.4.15 of PPW) is based on avoidance, minimisation, mitigation or restoration, compensation and enhancement, with long term management secured at each step, is the means of demonstrating how NBB has been secured. The following requirements will need to be taken into account as part of proposed energy projects:</p>	<p>Section 4.6 of EN-1 notes the requirements for BNG / NBB and notes that these are to be set out within any application for development consent.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commission suitably qualified ecologists and engage with local authority ecologists, NRW, the third sector and communities • undertake pre-application surveys, research and data searches to establish the baseline state of biodiversity and ecosystems resilience • pre-emptive site clearance should not be undertaken before submitting a planning application • provide long-term management plans setting out immediate and ongoing management of the site, future monitoring arrangements and funding mechanisms to achieve the management plan's objectives • all developments must deliver a net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystems resilience from the baseline state <p>We recommend that the AoS should highlight this as a consideration for the review of NPSs where it relates to schemes wholly and partly within Wales.</p> <p>Sites of Special Scientific Interest and irreplaceable habitats</p> <p>Paragraph 6.4.15 of PPW advises that proposals in statutory designated sites, and sites containing protected species and habitats which are irreplaceable, as a matter of principle, are unacceptable and therefore must be excluded from site searches undertaken by developers. The AoS should highlight this as a consideration in the review of NPSs in their application for schemes in Wales.</p> <p><i>Greenhouse gas emissions (pages 47-51)</i></p> <p>The information refers to an out-of-date UK Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) published in 2020, when new NDC for 2035 emission reduction targets for the Paris Agreement was published recently (January</p>	<p>Section 5 of EN-1 sets out matters relating to SSSI and notes that development on land within or outside a SSSI, 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 (including need) 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,</p>
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	<p>2025). Please refer to the UK's 2035 Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) emissions reduction target under the Paris Agreement - GOV.UK.</p> <p><i>Adaptation to a changing climate (pages 51-54)</i></p> <p>The AoS should consider the planning policy framework in relation to development and flood risk is set out in PPW and TAN 15.</p> <p>TAN 15 states that particular flooding consequences may not be acceptable for particular types of development. Industrial development such as power stations are described as highly vulnerable development, which should not be permitted in Zone C2 flood risk areas (as set out in the development advice map).</p> <p>We advise that such criteria for flood risk should be retained in the site selection process for nuclear power development because power stations are considered as highly vulnerable development in TAN 15 and therefore should not be permitted in Zone C2. For all other development in Zone C1 (defended) or C2 (undefended) a flood consequence assessment will need to be submitted. The acceptability criteria set out in TAN 15 must be satisfied, for example, structures to be flood free in a design event, and no increase of flooding elsewhere.</p> <p>The Flood Map for Planning (FMfP) should be considered as it is the best available information on current and future flood risk in Wales. It also includes information on coastal erosion risk, which is a consideration for any development proposal at the coast.</p> <p>Impacts of climate change need to be fully assessed, not only in terms of risks and consequences but also in terms of the type of mitigation and adaptation needed in the longer term, for example the need for additional</p>	<p>and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs.</p> <p>Noted. Reference to TAN 15 is made in Appendix C and considered as part of the AoS.</p> <p>UK Nationally Determined Contribution updated in AoS Report Table 4-3: Key Issues.</p> <p>Issues relating to flood risk are addressed in EN-1 (Section 5.8)</p>
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	<p>land to enable future mitigation measures, and the need for evacuation routes to remain operational during a flooding event and safe for users (employees and visitors). Clarity should also be provided on any potential impact if a facility cannot be accessible for a period of time.</p> <p><i>Water Environment (pages 56-59)</i></p> <p>The AoS scoping report includes limited consideration of the potential impact of energy generation on or from water availability, or of the need for water efficiency measures. Lack of emphasis on these criteria is a barrier to sustainability and should be considered further in the AoS.</p> <p>The AoS objectives for the water environment should place more emphasis on understanding water availability and reliability, water use and demand and water efficiency.</p> <p><i>Cultural Heritage (pages 61-63)</i></p> <p>The following should be considered for inclusion in the AoS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change impacts on the historic environment see Historic Environment and Climate Change Sector Adaptation Plan • Registered Historic Landscapes in Wales WOM21 Historic Landscape Areas (HLA) DataMapWales <p><i>Landscape, Waterscapes and Townscapes (pages 63-67)</i></p> <p>The following should be considered for inclusion in the AoS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the development of resilient ecological networks at a landscape scale 	<p>Noted – clarification on the need for consideration of water resources added to the AoS and is addressed in the NPS (Section 5 EN-1)</p> <p>Additional data has been added to Appendix D.</p> <p>Noted – the AoS considers green infrastructure and ecological connectivity, including at a landscape</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek to improve the quality and ecological function of Green Infrastructure • support opportunities to enhance urban or rural connections in terms of Green Infrastructure, especially those offering corridors for wildlife as well as recreation or green transport • support measures to enable landscape and ecosystem adaptation to climate change 	<p>scale. Issues relating to green infrastructure are also set out in the NPS – see section 5 of EN-1.</p>
	<p><i>Question 4 Are there any changes you consider should be made to the proposed AoS objectives and guide questions?</i></p> <p>AoS Scoping Report, Table 1 AoS Framework for Energy NPS (pages 82-89)</p> <p>Objective 2: Maximise adaptation and resilience of built assets, communities and people as well as natural assets, habitats and species, to the multiple effects of climate change (page 83)</p> <p>Objective 2 states “<i>Adaptation is about taking steps to live with the effects of climate change such as building quay walls and flood barriers.</i>” The examples given for ‘adaptation’ are solely focussed on building more structures to defend against climate change effects, which is a definition that is too narrow. Coastal adaptation is the term given to the process of managing the impact of coastal change, which can include a much broader range of options than additional defence investment and applies to areas with a Shoreline Management Plan policy of ‘managed realignment’ or ‘no active intervention’. You may find examples of coastal adaptation from North Norfolk useful: Coastal adaptation.pdf</p>	<p>AoS Report updated in ‘AoS Objectives and Guide Questions (AoS Framework)’ section.</p>

	<p>Objective 2, Guide questions (page 83)</p> <p>We recommend adding the underlined text to the guide question to incorporate erosion risk alongside flood risk:</p> <p><i>Lead to major infrastructure development that is flood and coastal erosion resilient over its lifetime, considering the effects of climate change, without increasing the flood or coastal erosion risk elsewhere and identifying opportunities to reduce the risk overall?</i></p> <p>Objective 6 Protect and enhance the character and quality of the landscapes, townscapes and waterscapes and protect and enhance visual amenity (page 86)</p> <p>We recommend the following items be added to the sixth bullet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognition of the role of designated landscapes in supporting nature recovery • the role of settings in addition to the designated landscapes <p>Objective 7 Protect and enhance the water environment (pages 86-87)</p> <p>Guide Question: Safeguard the availability of water resources (surface and groundwater)</p> <p>The guide questions should also seek to abstract water sustainably, ensuring sufficient water remains in our rivers and ground to protect the environment, and to help improve ecosystem resilience.</p> <p>Guide Question: Minimise the use of water resources/water consumption</p>	<p>Objective 2 guide questions updated in AoS Report Section 5.</p> <p>The AoS recognises the wide role of designated landscapes, though nature recovery more comprehensively addressed through AoS Objective 3.</p> <p>The role of setting is recognised in relation to the support question to AoS Objective 6.</p> <p>The issue of water resources (including abstraction and water efficiency) is considered in the AoS (see Objective 7)</p>
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	<p>We recommend that minimising the use of water or water consumption should also relate to the need for water efficiency measures, and temperature controls of cooling water to protect aquatic environment from discharges.</p> <p>Guide Question: Protect the integrity of coastal and estuarine processes?</p> <p>We recommend that the guide question also protects the integrity of rivers.</p> <p>Objective 12 Promote sustainable transport and minimise detrimental impacts on strategic transport network and disruption to basic services and infrastructure (pages 88-89)</p> <p>We recommend that the guide questions also refer to the importance of protecting the Public Rights of Way network and other access to landscapes and nature</p>	<p>and set out in EN-1 Section 5.16</p> <p>It is considered that the requirements relating to Water Framework Directive as set out in Objective 7 address the integrity of rivers.</p> <p>Noted – it was considered that PROW (and similar) are considered under the term ‘sustainable transport’ and are considered in the AoS. Note that EN-1 sets out the importance of Public Rights of way, National Trails, and other rights of access to land as these are considered important recreational facilities for example for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The Secretary of State should expect applicants to take appropriate mitigation measures to address adverse effects on coastal access,</p>
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		<p>National Trails, other rights of way and open access land and, where appropriate, to consider what opportunities there may be to improve or create new access. In considering revisions to an existing right of way, consideration should be given to the use, character, attractiveness, and convenience of the right of way.</p>
	<p><i>Question 5: Do you have further suggestions regarding the scope of the AoS and its proposed assessment of the reviewed NPS</i></p> <p>We offer the following items for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the inclusion of specific requirements under Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem Duty and Section 7 lists set out in the Environment (Wales Act) 2016 having regard to the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 to assess potential activities causing deterioration or preventing a water body or a Protected Area from achieving its objectives in the AoS and HRA whilst there is a focus on the duties of water and sewerage companies and reference to the Water Resources Act 1991 (page 53), the AoS should include the following NRW duties: 	<p>Noted – consideration is made of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, and note is made of priority habitats in Section 7 – see Appendix C and Appendix D.</p> <p>The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 are considered in Appendix C and Appendix D. These also are addressed in the AoS Report and EN-1 notes that the Secretary of State will need to</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to conserve, redistribute or otherwise augment water resources in England and Wales ○ to secure the proper use of water resources in England and Wales. ● as part of the assessment, consideration should be given to the DECCA framework. This includes the measurable attributes of ecosystem resilience: Diversity, Extent, Condition and Connectivity, and other aspects of ecosystem resilience i.e. adaptability, recovery and resistance. Ecosystem resilience is an emergent property of these attributes and other aspects. Further information is available here: Ecosystem Resilience in a Nutshell 1: what is ecosystem resilience? 	<p>give impacts on the water environment more weight where a project would have an adverse effect on the achievement of the environmental objectives established under the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017.</p> <p>Water resources are addressed in EN-1 Section 5.16</p>
JNCC	<p><i>Question 1: Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the AoS process?</i></p> <p>On p17 note that JNCC guidelines for geophysical surveys and piling noise are included but the JNCC guidelines for unexploded ordnance (UXO) have not been included; (https://hub.jncc.gov.uk/assets/cbd480f1-47ea-4d78-b94c-04e0f9389daa)</p> <p>On p19/20 the recent Defra noise policy does not seem to have been included; Reducing marine noise - GOV.UK</p>	<p>Plans and Policies added to Section 4 of AoS Report and Appendix C</p>

	<p><i>Question 2: Is there additional information that needs to be considered as part of the baseline data?</i></p> <p>We query whether given the timing of this work and the ongoing work within Defra to find suitable compensation sites for benthic habitats as to whether these compensation sites may need to be included further in the baseline?</p>	<p>Noted. It is the intention that the NPS will be updated and reviewed on a regular basis (understood consideration for a review will be made every 5 years). As such, each review will utilise the latest information available at that time.</p> <p>While only certain aspects of the NPS have been updated (EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5), the NPS as a whole remains valid. Matters set out in the updated EN-1 etc., apply to all technologies considered under the NPS.</p> <p>No prioritisation / weighting has been given to any AoS Objective. How it is considered that the NPS ‘performs’ in relation to each</p>
	<p><i>Question 3: Do you consider that the range of sustainability problems and issues covered is appropriate?</i></p> <p>Whilst appreciating that this review only covers a certain subset of policies and as such sectors, it should be borne in mind that the biodiversity issues and opportunities listed in Table 4 for example are not specific only to the subset of policies under review. For example, the planning / design of ALL new Energy developments and their associated infrastructure avoiding sensitive areas, such as MPAs is required, or compensation/MEEB routes applied to ALL sectors if this can’t be achieved. This reliance on ALL sectors treating such policies equally would be worth reflecting on in this review.</p>	
	<p><i>Question 4: Are there any changes you consider should be made to the proposed AoS objectives and guide questions?</i></p> <p>Many objectives are covered understandably given the vast cope of this work, but can they all be achieved at the same time or is some form of prioritisation/ weighting needing to be taken into consideration? Can we really achieve all the objectives to the same degree?</p>	

	<p><i>Question 5: Do you have further suggestions regarding the scope of the AoS and its proposed assessment of the reviewed NPS?</i></p> <p>It is noted that a separate HRA process for the Energy NPS is being developed for this work. Will this include MCZs, or will a sperate MCZ assessment be conducted?</p>	<p>Objective is set out in the AoS Report.</p> <p>Noted. MCZ are a type of Marine Protected Area but they are not designated under the Habitats Regulations. Each MCZ is established by a legal order made by Defra under section 116(1) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA). Therefore, on that basis, they are not included in the HRA. See separate HRA Report for details of scope.</p>
Environment Agency	<p><i>Question 1: Are there other plans, programmes or environmental protection objectives that should be identified and reviewed as part of the AoS process?</i></p> <p>Pg16 & Pg19</p> <p>Water Environment: Recommend adding 'Water Act 2003'; Water Resource Management Plans; Regional Water Resource plans; National Framework for Water Resources (England section); Abstraction Licensing Strategies to this list too</p> <p>Above need adding to Table 2 in Appendix 1 too. And National Framework to Table 3 in Appendix 1.</p>	<p>Plans and Policies added to Appendix C.</p>

	<p>Land Use, Soil and Agriculture Pg26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Seek to reclaim derelict and contaminated land’ – please change from ‘contaminated land’ which has a legal definition under the Part 2A Contaminated Land regulations to ‘land affected by contamination’ instead. This would bring more sites into scope. Would be good to add an objective for Sustainable remediation of land affected contamination from legacy use which also resilient to climate change. • ‘Protect farmland and soils - particularly those of the best value’ – Recommend adding an objective to protect all land and soil quality not just farmland. • ‘Ensure appropriate management and storage of soils during construction’ – could refer to imminent Defra’s update to Code of Practice for Soils on Construction sites. Recommend adding an objective of having keeping soils on site rather than disposing off site to landfill, but also restoration on site to have healthy soils on site after construction which can help attenuate and mitigate flood risk. 	<p>Updated in AoS Report Section 4</p> <p>The AoS Objective is to protect soil resources, with a guide question to ensure the protection of soil resources and avoid soil health degradation through sustainable soil management and re-use. EN-1 notes that applicants are encouraged to develop and implement a Soil Management Plan which could help minimise potential land contamination. The sustainable reuse of soils needs to be carefully considered in line with good practice guidance where large quantities of soils are surplus</p>
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		to requirements or are affected by contamination.
	<p><i>Question 2: Is there additional information that needs to be considered as part of the baseline data?</i></p> <p>Table 1 & 2 (Pg33 & Pg34)</p> <p>The location of Groundwater Source Protection Zones should be considered as part of baseline data under the ‘water resources and water quality heading’ in Tables 1 and 2. The location of groundwater source protection zones are included in Figure 9A but the importance of these have not been included in the ‘summary of baseline information’ or ‘key designations’ tables in the main scoping report, and Appendices Volume 1.0. Source Protection Zones show the level of risk to a drinking water supply from pollution. Groundwater must be protected from pollution and groundwater in a Source Protection Zone 1 is the most vulnerable to pollution.</p> <p>Table 1 - Water Quality and Water Resources (Pg33)</p> <p>Water Quality and Water Resources – inclusion of Drinking Water Protected Areas (DWPA’s). All groundwater bodies in England are designated as drinking water protected areas (DrWPAs). This aims to protect groundwater from over-abstraction and to prevent deterioration in groundwater quality that could increase the treatment of drinking water. The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 Article 8 requires Drinking Water Protected Areas to be identified (or including those</p>	<p>Updated ‘Baseline Information and Key Issues’ in AoS Report Section 4 and Baseline Information in Appendix D</p> <p>Updated ‘Baseline Information and Key Issues’ in AoS Report Section 4 and Baseline Information in Appendix D</p>

	<p>that could have such use in the future) and have measures in place that aim to reduce treatment of drinking water within DrWPA.</p> <p>Table 1 - Water Quality and Resources section (Pg33)</p> <p>National Framework for Water Resources and Abstraction Licensing Strategies – both provide data on water availability at different scales that would be useful in assessing water use and availability.</p> <p>Appendices Volume 2 it would be useful to have a water availability map shown on there for England</p> <p>Table 1 ‘Contaminated Land’</p> <p>When it states Contaminated Land – does this mean the sites where the local authorities have determined/designated Part 2A Contaminated Land or ‘land affected by contamination’? If Part 2a then could add ‘Part 2A Contaminated Land and Special Sites’. They could also include the Local Authority Brownfield Sites Brownfield land Dataset Planning Data</p>	<p>Plans and Policies added to Appendix C</p> <p>Additional text added regarding land remediation and a changing climate.</p>
	<p><i>Question 3: Do you consider that the range of sustainability problems and issues covered is appropriate?</i></p> <p>Table 4 – Key issues and opportunities - Adapting to Climate Change</p> <p>Recommend this section includes reference to land remediation needing to resilient to climate change. Link to sustainable remediation guidance: LCRM: Before you start - GOV.UK and ‘A Framework for Assessing the Sustainability of Soil and Groundwater Remediation’ on CL:AIRE website.</p> <p>Table 4 - Key Issues and Opportunities – Water Environment (Pg56-59)</p>	<p>Additional text added to strengthen recognition of groundwater and the pressure to them from energy infrastructure e.g. through abstraction or controlled /</p>

	<p>We welcome the inclusion of the water environment as a key issue. The information in this section predominantly relates to surface water. We would recommend that additional information is provided in this section for groundwater bodies (GWBs)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In 2019, only 45% of GWBs achieved good chemical status, with nitrate as the main cause of failure 2. Unsustainable abstraction negatively affects 27% of GWBs. Climate change and population growth will further increase this pressure, particularly in the areas most reliant on groundwater for public water supply <p>Many GWBs are not expected to achieve good status for >20 years. Due to often long groundwater recovery times, it is essential to implement catchment initiatives and remedial measures as soon as possible. Some GWB may never achieve good status.</p> <p>Without the information above, this section would predominantly been about surface water with the ‘summary of evolution’ not reflective of groundwater.</p> <p>The NPS should seek to prevent pollution of groundwater bodies not just during construction and operation but also during decommissioning.</p> <p>For Water Demand the second column should read ‘Declining’ as the pressures on water are not likely to decrease or improve. Third column should have a sentence around making sure any water is used efficiently and sites where water is available should be prioritised.</p> <p>Recommend including the recognition by cleaning up land and soils affected by contamination, it benefits the water environment.</p>	<p>uncontrolled discharges. EN-1, Section 5.16 also notes issues relating to the water environment, including groundwater and sets out that applicants should avoid locating potentially polluting activities in the most sensitive locations for groundwater. The NPS and AoS consider all phases – construction, operation and decommissioning.</p> <p>Additional note is made on water demand and note is made that availability of water resource is predicted to decline due to ongoing / increasing pressures.</p> <p>Recognition is made that remediation of land / soil can benefit other environmental topics such as the water environment but note that land remediation also needs</p>
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	<p>Table 4 - Key Issues and Opportunities – Soil and Contaminated Land (Pg59-61)</p> <p>In the 4th paragraph there's mention of 'special sites' but it should include the context of 'contaminated land and special sites' determined under Part 2a regime. We welcome 'Protect soil resources, promote use of brownfield land and avoid land contamination' but it would benefit some clarification – 'Protect soil resources, promote and regenerate brownfield land and prevent future land contamination'.</p>	<p>to be resilient to a changing climate.</p> <p>Additional clarification provided on contaminated land.</p>
	<p><i>Question 4: Are there any changes you consider should be made to the proposed AoS objectives and guide questions?</i></p> <p>Objective 2 (Pg83)</p> <p>Adapting to Climate change will also mean adapting to dry weather and lower rainfall- add drought into the list of examples in the brackets Needs something in here in the questions about – promote mitigation against drought and lack of water caused by climate change.</p> <p>Any land remediation carried out also need to be climate change resilient too.</p> <p>Objective 7 - Protect and enhance the water environment (Pg87)</p> <p>'Protect groundwater in line with the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017' and prevent the deterioration of groundwater bodies (for both groundwater quality and groundwater resources)</p>	<p>Additional text has been added to the AoS in relation to drought and such matters are also addressed in EN-1, Section 5.16.</p> <p>Clarification added that land remediation needs to be resilient to a changing climate.</p> <p>The AoS decision aid questions note the need to protect groundwater and the need to avoid pollution is</p>

	<p>We would suggest re-phrasing “reduce operational and accidental discharges to the water environment” to “Avoid polluting discharges to the environment and prevent pollution of groundwater”</p> <p>We would suggest re-phrasing “Minimise the use of water resources/ consumption” to “minimise the volume of water required in construction and operational phases through efficient use and innovative technologies”</p> <p>Objective 9 (Pg87)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Seek to remediate contaminated land?’ - needs to include all land affected contamination not just ‘contaminated land and special sites’ designated under the Part 2A regime. • ‘Ensure the protection of soil resources and avoid soil health degradation through sustainable soil management and re-use?’ - need to widen scope of soil resource protection to soil quality (chemical) as well as the physical quantity and properties. <p><i>Question 5: Do you have further suggestions regarding the scope of the AoS and its proposed assessment of the reviewed NPS?</i></p> <p>PPPs</p> <p>Page 19 of Scoping Report Human Health and Appendices Volume 1 page 102: the Contaminated Land (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Contaminated Land (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 – these regs are not solely about human health, they also apply to controlled waters (surface water and groundwater). It would be more appropriate to include these Regs under the ‘cross thematic’ heading rather than human health.</p>	<p>inherent in the AoS Objective and questions.</p> <p>The text ‘seek to remediate contaminated land’ is taken to mean all land affected by contamination. This is expanded upon in the AoS Report.</p> <p>References to soil health are intended holistically and it is noted in the AoS Report that in terms of mitigating impacts on soil resources, EN-1 requires applicants to identify any effects on soil health and protect and improve soil quality.</p> <p>Noted – additional reference made.</p>
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	<p>Table 4 - Key Issues and Opportunities – Water Environment</p> <p>Page 57 – First mention of Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. The report should confirm that Safeguard Zones are areas where additional measures are needed to improve water quality. Safeguard Zones were established by the Environment Agency originally under the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>Page 57 – First mention of Source Protection Zones in the report. SPZs are used to define areas close to drinking water sources where the risk associated with groundwater contamination is greatest.</p> <p>Land Contamination</p> <p>Increasing the current ambition for land and soils: ensuring any land (and groundwater) affected by contamination are remediated (rather than just ‘managed’) to a standard where so they will not be revisited under Part 2a.</p> <p>Use of National Quality Mark Scheme (NQMS) and Competent Persons (consultants) so that land and groundwater reports submitted for planning/permit/authorisation applications ‘get it right first time’.</p>	<p>Noted – additional clarification made in respect of Drinking Water Safeguard Zones and Source Protection Zones.</p> <p>The need to remediate land is recognised in the AoS and addressed in the NPS (see for example EN-1, Section 5.11).</p> <p>The need for EIA is set out within the NPS and guidance on EIA sets out the need for competent persons.</p>
Cadw	<p>Need to add reference to:</p> <p>Historic Environment and Climate Change in Wales Sector Adaptation Plan 2019</p> <p>Historic Environment Act (Wales) 2016. Should be replaced with Historic Environment Act (Wales) 2023</p> <p>Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment 2017</p>	<p>Reference added to sector adaptation plan (2020) and consideration made.</p> <p>Amendments made in respect of the noted legislation.</p>

	Why does Figure 3 not include information on Wales? Available on Cof Cymru	<p>Note made of TAN 24 – see Appendix C</p> <p>Noted – separate maps for England and Wales are provided in Appendix Vol. 2</p>
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Appendix C. Review of Policies, Plans and Programmes

Note: The following review of Plans, Policy is not to be considered an exhaustive list and elements may have been superseded. It is the purpose of this list to demonstrate the context of the NPS and associated AoS and to show how these are broadly influenced in setting Objectives for both.

Table C-1: Key Plans, Policies and Legislation - International

Policy, Plan or Programme	Key Objectives / Targets / Guidance	Implications for the AoS
BIODIVERSITY		
Convention on Biological Diversity 2010	Sets out a conservation plan to protect global biodiversity, and an international treaty to establish a fair and equitable system to enable nations to co-operate in accessing and sharing the benefits of genetic resources. The new global vision is “By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential to all people”.	Ensure protection of biodiversity within AoS framework.
Kumming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework 2023	<p>The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, building on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, its achievements, gaps, and lessons learned, and the experience and achievements of other relevant multilateral environmental agreements, sets out an ambitious plan to implement broad-based action to bring about a transformation in our societies’ relationship with biodiversity by 2030, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, and ensure that, by 2050, the shared vision of living in harmony with nature is fulfilled.</p> <p>The vision of the Framework is a world of living in harmony with nature where “by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”</p> <p>The mission of the Framework for the period up to 2030, towards the 2050 vision is: To take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet by conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and by</p>	Ensure AoS framework taken account of goals and targets set out in this framework.

	<p>ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, while providing the necessary means of implementation.</p> <p>The Framework has four long-term goals for 2050 related to the 2050 Vision for biodiversity.</p> <p>GOAL A: The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems are maintained, enhanced, or restored, substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050; human induced extinction of known threatened species is halted, and, by 2050, the extinction rate and risk of all species are reduced tenfold and the abundance of native wild species is increased to healthy and resilient levels; and the genetic diversity within populations of wild and domesticated species, is maintained, safeguarding their adaptive potential.</p> <p>GOAL B: Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, are valued, maintained and enhanced, with those currently in decline being restored, supporting the achievement of sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations by 2050.</p> <p>GOAL C: The monetary and non-monetary benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and digital sequence information on genetic resources, and of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, as applicable, are shared fairly and equitably, including, as appropriate with indigenous peoples and local communities, and substantially increased by 2050, while ensuring traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources is appropriately protected, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in accordance with internationally agreed access and benefit-sharing instruments.</p> <p>GOAL D: Adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and access to and transfer of technology to fully implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework are secured and equitably accessible to all Parties, especially developing country Parties, in particular the</p>	
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	<p>least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, progressively closing the biodiversity finance gap of \$700 billion per year, and aligning financial flows with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the 2050 Vision for biodiversity.</p> <p>The Framework has 23 action-oriented global targets for urgent action over the decade to 2030. The actions set out in each target need to be initiated immediately and completed by 2030. Together, the results will enable achievement towards the outcome-oriented goals for 2050. Actions to reach these targets should be implemented consistently and in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols, and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national circumstances, priorities and socioeconomic conditions.</p> <p>1. Reducing threats to biodiversity</p> <p>TARGET 1: Ensure that all areas are under participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land- and sea-use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.</p> <p>TARGET 2: Ensure that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity.</p> <p>TARGET 3: Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed</p>	
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	<p>through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.</p> <p>TARGET 4: Ensure urgent management actions to halt human induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk, as well as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild and domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimize human-wildlife conflict for coexistence.</p> <p>TARGET 5: Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimizing impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spillover, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.</p> <p>TARGET 6: Eliminate, minimize, reduce and or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services by identifying and managing pathways of the introduction of alien species, preventing the introduction and establishment of priority invasive alien species, reducing the rates of introduction and establishment of other known or potential invasive alien species by at least 50 per cent by 2030, and eradicating or controlling invasive alien species, especially in priority sites, such as islands.</p> <p>TARGET 7: Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including: (a) by reducing excess nutrients lost to the</p>	
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	<p>environment by at least half, including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use; (b) by reducing the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least half, including through integrated pest management, based on science, taking into account food security and livelihoods; and (c) by preventing, reducing, and working towards eliminating plastic pollution.</p> <p>TARGET 8: Minimize the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity and increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, while minimizing negative and fostering positive impacts of climate action on biodiversity.</p> <p>2. Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing</p> <p>TARGET 9: Ensure that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, thereby providing social, economic and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations and those most dependent on biodiversity, including through sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products and services that enhance biodiversity, and protecting and encouraging customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.</p> <p>TARGET 10: Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches, contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems, and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity and maintaining nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services.</p>	
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	<p>TARGET 11: Restore, maintain and enhance nature’s contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as the regulation of air, water and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature.</p> <p>TARGET 12: Significantly increase the area and quality, and connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature, and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanization and to the provision of ecosystem functions and services.</p> <p>TARGET 13: Take effective legal, policy, administrative and capacity-building measures at all levels, as appropriate, to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilization of genetic resources and from digital sequence information on genetic resources, as well as traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and facilitating appropriate access to genetic resources, and by 2030, facilitating a significant increase of the benefits shared, in accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments.</p> <p>3. Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming</p> <p>TARGET 14: Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments and, as appropriate, national accounting, within and across all levels of government and across all sectors, in particular those with significant impacts on biodiversity, progressively aligning all relevant</p>	
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	<p>public and private activities, and fiscal and financial flows with the goals and targets of this framework.</p> <p>TARGET 15: Take legal, administrative or policy measures to encourage and enable business, and in particular to ensure that large and transnational companies and financial institutions:</p> <p>(a) Regularly monitor, assess, and transparently disclose their risks, dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, including with requirements for all large as well as transnational companies and financial institutions along their operations, supply and value chains, and portfolios;</p> <p>(b) Provide information needed to consumers to promote sustainable consumption patterns;</p> <p>(c) Report on compliance with access and benefit-sharing regulations and measures, as applicable;</p> <p>in order to progressively reduce negative impacts on biodiversity, increase positive impacts, reduce biodiversity-related risks to business and financial institutions, and promote actions to ensure sustainable patterns of production.</p> <p>TARGET 16: Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make sustainable consumption choices, including by establishing supportive policy, legislative or regulatory frameworks, improving education and access to relevant and accurate information and alternatives, and by 2030, reduce the global footprint of consumption in an equitable manner, including through halving global food waste, significantly reducing overconsumption and substantially reducing waste generation, in order for all people to live well in harmony with Mother Earth.</p> <p>TARGET 17: Establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement in all countries, biosafety measures as set out in Article 8(g) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and measures</p>	
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	<p>for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits as set out in Article 19 of the Convention.</p> <p>TARGET 18: Identify by 2025, and eliminate, phase out or reform incentives, including subsidies, harmful for biodiversity, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective and equitable way, while substantially and progressively reducing them by at least \$500 billion per year by 2030, starting with the most harmful incentives, and scale up positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.</p> <p>TARGET 19: Substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention, to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, mobilizing at least \$200 billion per year by 2030, including by:</p> <p>(a) Increasing total biodiversity related international financial resources from developed countries, including official development assistance, and from countries that voluntarily assume obligations of developed country Parties, to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, to at least \$20 billion per year by 2025, and to at least \$30 billion per year by 2030;</p> <p>(b) Significantly increasing domestic resource mobilization, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments according to national needs, priorities and circumstances;</p> <p>(c) Leveraging private finance, promoting blended finance, implementing strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encouraging the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other instruments;</p>	
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	<p>(d) Stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, and benefit-sharing mechanisms, with environmental and social safeguards;</p> <p>(e) Optimizing co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises;</p> <p>(f) Enhancing the role of collective actions, including by indigenous peoples and local communities, Mother Earth centric actions[1] and non-market-based approaches including community based natural resource management and civil society cooperation and solidarity aimed at the conservation of biodiversity;</p> <p>(g) Enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of resource provision and use;</p> <p>TARGET 20: Strengthen capacity-building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote development of and access to innovation and technical and scientific cooperation, including through South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, to meet the needs for effective implementation, particularly in developing countries, fostering joint technology development and joint scientific research programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and strengthening scientific research and monitoring capacities, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the Framework.</p> <p>TARGET 21: Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge are accessible to decision makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness-raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management and, also in this context, traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies of indigenous</p>	
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	<p>peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent, in accordance with national legislation.</p> <p>TARGET 22:</p> <p>Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.</p> <p>TARGET 23: Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the Framework through a gender-responsive approach, where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognizing their equal rights and access to land and natural resources and their full, equitable, meaningful and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision-making related to biodiversity.</p>	
Bern Convention	<p>The principal aims of the Convention are to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats (listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention), to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species) listed in Appendix 3. To this end the Convention imposes legal obligations on contracting parties, protecting over 500 wild plant species and more than 1000 wild animal species.</p>	<p>Ensure protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitat within AoS framework.</p>
Ramsar Convention 1971	<p>The Convention covers all aspects of wetland conservation and wise use. The Convention has three main 'pillars' of activity: the designation of wetlands of international importance as Ramsar sites; the promotion of the wise-use of all wetlands in the territory of each country;</p>	<p>Ensure protection of Ramsar sites</p>

	and international co-operation with other countries to further the wise-use of wetlands and their resources.	within AoS framework.
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals 1979 (Bonn Convention)	The Convention is an international treaty of the United Nations which provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats. This treaty brings together the States through which migratory animals pass, the Range States, and lays the legal foundation for internationally coordinated conservation measures throughout a migratory range.	Ensure protection of migratory animals and their habitats
Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) 1999	This is an intergovernmental treaty dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats across Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, Greenland and the Canadian Archipelago. Developed under the framework of the Bonn Convention and administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), AEWA brings together countries and the wider international conservation community in an effort to establish coordinated conservation and management of migratory waterbirds throughout their entire migratory range.	Ensure protection of migratory waterbirds within AoS framework.
CLIMATE CHANGE		
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change 1992, Kyoto Protocol 1997, Paris Agreement 2015 etc.	<p>A series of international agreements setting targets and legally binding agreements for industrialised countries to cut their greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris Agreement is the latest international agreement and its overarching goal is to hold “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and pursue efforts “to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.”</p> <p>Note is also made of the UK Nationally Determined Contribution that commits to reducing greenhouse gases by 68% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.</p>	Ensure reduction of greenhouse gas emissions within the AoS framework.

<p>UK-EU TAC Agreement 2021</p>	<p>Following the UK's departure from the EU, the UK is released from the EU Renewable Energy Directive 2009 (2009/28/EC) and EU Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU). The Trade and Cooperation (TAC) reaffirms a number of the UK and EU ambitions relating to energy, notably:</p> <p>The UK and EU should recognise the mutual benefit in cooperation in areas of shared interest such as nuclear research.</p> <p>In recognition of the importance of a secure, affordable and sustainable energy system in relation to climate change, subsidies in relation to energy shall be aimed at by the UK and EU.</p> <p>The UK and EU shall facilitate removal of obstacles to trade and investment relating to energy efficient products and services and renewable energy.</p>	<p>Ensure an objective considering alternative / renewable technologies for energy production is included within the AoS framework.</p> <p>Ensure an objective relating to the prudent use of natural resources (including energy) is included within the AoS framework.</p>
<p>HERITAGE</p>		
<p>World Heritage Convention 1972</p>	<p>This convention noted that the cultural heritage and the natural heritage are increasingly threatened with destruction not only by the traditional causes of decay, but also by changing social and economic conditions which aggravate the situation with even more formidable phenomena of damage or destruction and considered that deterioration or disappearance of any item of the cultural or natural heritage constitutes a harmful impoverishment of the heritage of all the nations of the world.</p>	<p>Ensure protection of cultural heritage and natural heritage within AoS framework.</p>

<p>Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage 2001</p>	<p>The UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage is intended to enable States to better protect their submerged cultural heritage.</p> <p>The Convention;</p> <p>sets out basic principles for the protection of underwater cultural heritage;</p> <p>provides a detailed State cooperation system; and</p> <p>provides widely recognized practical rules for the treatment and research of underwater cultural heritage.</p> <p>The UK has not ratified the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, but the Annex to the 2001 Convention – Rules Concerning Activities Directed at the Underwater Cultural Heritage – provides an accepted model of ‘best practice’ for underwater archaeology.</p>	<p>Ensure protection of underwater cultural heritage within AoS framework.</p>
<p>Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1992) – the ‘Valetta Convention’.</p>	<p>The European Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) replaced and updated the original London Convention of 1969. It reflected the change in the nature of threats to the archaeological heritage. It established a body of new basic legal standards for Europe, to be met by national policies for the protection of archaeological assets as sources of scientific and documentary evidence, in line with the principles of integrated conservation. It makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. It is concerned in particular with arrangements to be made for co-operation among archaeologists and town and regional planners in order to ensure optimum conservation of archaeological heritage.</p>	<p>Ensure protection of archaeological heritage within AoS framework.</p>
<p>LANDSCAPE</p>		

<p>European Landscape Convention 2000 – the ‘Florence Convention’</p>	<p>The European Landscape Convention is part of the Council of Europe's work on natural and cultural heritage, spatial planning and the environment.</p> <p>The convention states that:</p> <p>the landscape contributes to the formation of local cultures and that it is a basic component of the European natural and cultural heritage, contributing to human well-being and consolidation of the European identity</p> <p>that developments in agriculture, forestry, industrial and mineral production techniques and in regional planning, town planning, transport, infrastructure, tourism and recreation and, at a more general level, changes in the world economy are in many cases accelerating the transformation of landscapes.</p> <p>The aims of this Convention are to promote landscape protection, management and planning, and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues.</p>	<p>Ensure protection of landscapes within AoS framework.</p>
<p>MARINE ENVIRONMENT</p>		
<p>The OSPAR Convention 1992</p>	<p>The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic is the current legislative instrument regulating international cooperation on environmental protection in the North-East Atlantic. This specifically addresses:</p> <p>Prevention and elimination of pollution from land-based sources;</p> <p>Prevention and elimination of pollution by dumping or incineration;</p> <p>Prevention and elimination of pollution from offshore sources;</p> <p>Assessment of the quality of the marine environment;</p>	<p>The AoS should consider protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic.</p>

	On the protection and conservation of the ecosystems and biological diversity of the maritime area.	
NOISE		
WHO Guidelines for Community Noise 1999	The World Health Organisation (WHO) publication entitled ‘Guidelines for Community Noise’ (1999), provides guidance with regard to recommended internal and external noise levels for various building uses, outlining the potential health impacts associated with noise. Specifically, the document recommends internal and external noise levels that would provide an acoustic environment that is conducive to uninterrupted speech and sleep.	Ensure potential health impacts associated with noise are considered in the AoS framework.
WHO Night Noise Guidelines for Europe 2009 and 2018 update	<p>The World Health Organisation (WHO) Night Noise Guidelines for Europe (NNG) 2009 are health-based guidelines and are to be considered an extension and update to the WHO Guidelines for Community Noise 1999. These guidelines were updated in 2018. The main purpose of these guidelines is to provide recommendations for protecting human health from exposure to environmental noise originating from various sources: transportation (road traffic, railway and aircraft) noise, wind turbine noise and leisure noise.</p> <p>WHO NNG provides evidence based policy advice to member states in the development of future legislation and policy action in the area of control and surveillance of night noise exposure.</p>	Ensure that night noise is addressed through the AoS framework.
Environmental noise guidelines for the European Region	The WHO Regional Office for Europe has developed these guidelines, based on the growing understanding of the negative health impacts of exposure to environmental noise. The main purpose of these guidelines is to provide recommendations for protecting human health from exposure to environmental noise originating from various sources: transportation (road traffic, railway and aircraft) noise, wind turbine noise and leisure noise. They provide robust public health advice underpinned by evidence, which is essential to drive policy action that	Ensure potential health impacts associated with noise are

	will protect communities from the adverse effects of noise. The guidelines are published by the WHO Regional Office for Europe.	considered in the AoS framework.
HUMAN HEALTH		
WHO Closing the Gap: Social Determinants of Health 2008	<p>The report prepared by the Commission on Social Determinants of Health aims to:</p> <p>Improve daily living conditions.</p> <p>Tackle inequitable distribution of power, money and resources.</p> <p>Measure and understand the problem and assess the impact on action.</p> <p>Recommendations are made to tackle inequalities</p>	The AoS should consider the improvement of health and equitable distribution of resources equity.
TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS		
Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context 1991	<p>The Convention was adopted in 1991 and entered into force in September 2007. The Convention and Protocol lie in an area of mixed competence (environment). The UK and the EU are parties to the Convention. The EU has implemented the EIA Directive that has been transposed into UK domestic law.</p> <p>The Convention sets out the obligations of Parties to assess the environmental impact of certain activities at an early stage of planning. It also lays down the general obligations of Parties to consult each other on all major projects under consideration that are likely to have significant transboundary effects. A revision to the Convention in 2004 indicated that affected Parties should be allowed to participate in scoping as appropriate.</p> <p>The Protocol on SEA (Kiev, 2003) augments the Espoo Convention and requires Parties to assess the environmental effects of their plans and programmes. The protocol also proposes</p>	As a matter of course, Espoo Parties will be engaged as part of the new NPS and AoS consultation process. Transboundary Consultation under the Espoo convention will also be undertaken if it is concluded

	extensive public participation in Government decision-making. The UK has signed but not ratified the Protocol. The EU has ratified, and implements through the SEA Directive, transposed in UK domestic law via the SEA Regulations.	that proposed activities are likely to cause a significant adverse impact in the environment in another State of the European Economic Area.
PUBLIC CONSULTATION		
Aarhus Convention 2001	The Aarhus Convention is a multilateral environmental agreement through which the opportunities for citizens to access environmental information are increased and transparent and reliable regulation procedure is secured. It encourages access to information, public participation and access to justice.	The NPS and AoS will be consulted upon and open to scrutiny as per the requirement of the relevant regulations.

Table C-1 - Key Plans, Policies and Legislation - National (United Kingdom)

Policy, Plan or Programme	Key Objectives / Targets / Guidance	Implications for the AoS
CROSS - THEMATIC		
Environmental Protection Act 1990	<p>This act brings in a system of integrated pollution control for the disposal of wastes to land, water and air. There are three parts of the Act. These are:</p> <p>Part I- establishes integrated pollution control and gives Local Authorities new powers to control air pollution from a range of prescribed processes;</p> <p>Part II- improves the rules on waste disposal; and</p> <p>Part III- covers statutory nuisances and clean air.</p>	<p>Ensure that prevention and minimisation of pollution to air and water is considered in the AoS framework.</p>
Environment Act 2021	<p>The Environment Act 2021 requires that the Secretary of State prepare an Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) for significantly improving the natural environment. EIPs must have a minimum duration of 15 years. The Environment Act also required government to set long-term, legally binding environmental targets.</p> <p>The first EIP was published in 2018. The government must complete a statutory review of the EIP at least every 5 years. Its first revision (EIP23) was published in January 2023 and includes 13 legally binding environmental targets set under the EA 2021, which cover biodiversity (including the Apex target to reverse the decline in species abundance by the end of 2030), air quality (PM2.5), water, resource efficiency and waste reduction, tree and woodland cover, and Marine Protected Areas.</p>	<p>The AoS needs to consider this far-reaching piece of legislation in terms of four priority areas: air quality, water, biodiversity and resource efficiency and waste.</p>

	<p>In July 2024 the government announced a second statutory review and revision of the EIP.</p> <p>Key relevant provisions:</p> <p>Biodiversity Net Gain</p> <p>The Act provides for a biodiversity net gain requirement for NSIPs that once commenced, will apply to NSIPs in England unless excluded development.</p> <p>The Act outlines that the biodiversity gain objective for NSIPs is to be set out and defined in a policy statement called a 'biodiversity gain statement'. The biodiversity gain objective will require that development increases its pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat by the value specified in the biodiversity gain statement (which must be at least 10%). The biodiversity gain statements will also prescribe the processes through which biodiversity gains may be calculated, demonstrated, and verified.</p> <p>The Act sets out that following commencement of the schedule, the Secretary of State must amend the national policy statements when they are next reviewed so as to include a biodiversity gain statement. In the time between the schedule being commenced and a review of a national policy statement, a separate 'biodiversity gain statement' may be issued which would have the same effect as a statement integrated within a national policy statement.</p> <p>Once these provisions are commenced, the Secretary of State must be satisfied that the biodiversity gain objective set out in the relevant biodiversity gain statement is met, in order for consent to be granted.</p> <p>Waste and resource efficiency</p>	
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	<p>The Act gives wide ranging powers to make regulations about who producer obligations should apply to and which products or materials should be covered. These powers are intended to prevent waste/reduce the amount of a product that becomes waste and increase re-use, redistribution, recovery and recycling. Producers can get ahead of these regulations, and minimise any eventual requirements to pay disposal costs, by designing products with these objectives in mind.</p>	
<p>Environmental Principles Policy Statement 2023</p>	<p>The Environment Act 2021 places a duty on Ministers of the Crown to have due regard to the environmental principles policy statement. The policy statement sets out how policymakers should apply environmental principles to support environmental protection and enhancement. The final version of the strategic policy statement was laid in Parliament on 31 January 2023. The duty will commence on 1 November 2023.</p> <p>The 5 principles in this policy statement are internationally recognised as successful benchmarks for environmental protection and enhancement. When making policy, and where relevant, ministers will need to consider the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration principle: look at opportunities to embed environmental protection and/or enhancement - Prevention principle: prevent environmental harm before it occurs or contain existing damage - Rectification at source principle: environmental damage should be addressed at its origin to avoid the need to remedy its effects later - Polluter pays principle: the costs of pollution should be borne by those causing it 	<p>The assessment approach used in the AoS should enshrine these five international principles, as appropriate, in the various topics of the AoS Framework.</p>

	<p>- Precautionary principle: where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, a lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation</p> <p>The purpose of these principles is to guide ministers and policymakers towards opportunities to prevent environmental damage and enhance the environment. However, the principles are not rules and they cannot dictate policy decisions by ministers. Policymakers should consider and use the principles iteratively from the outset and during subsequent stages in policy development. They should identify the potential environmental effects (positive or negative) and use the principles to inform and influence the design of the policy. The 5 principles play an important role to support Environmental Improvement Plans and to delivering on our net zero commitment to tackle climate change.</p> <p>The integration principle is overarching, and simply requires that policymakers should look for opportunities to embed environmental protection into policy. Not all environmental principles are of the same nature or function; they serve different purposes and will focus the policy in different ways. Some of the environmental principles will be appropriate for all relevant policy areas. Other principles will only be relevant in circumstances where there are specific factors for their use. In order for the principles to be most cost-effective and lead to better environmental outcomes, it is preferable for environmental damage to be prevented under the prevention principle. When environmental damage is already occurring, policymakers should consider the timeliness and urgency of policy interventions intended to achieve environmental protection. If it is to be addressed after it has occurred, then the rectification at source and polluter pays principles should be considered to reduce, mitigate or disincentivise damage.</p> <p>This order of consideration is not fixed and may be adjusted if a different order more appropriately addresses a policy's environmental effects. Where a significant adverse</p>	
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	<p>effect is likely as a result of a policy, it may be necessary to consider all principles in determining the best policy.</p> <p>Many actions can be taken based on applying the principles, either alone or in combination with others. Possible actions that could be taken as a result of having considered the principles may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amending policy options or including an additional policy option in the initial design of a policy, which reflects consideration of the environmental principles. In some cases, considering a principle may introduce a new option as a different solution to the policy problem. For example, one where the polluter may pay. This option would then be subject to the same policy evaluation as the existing options. - Reframing the policy to accommodate the principles. In some cases, the policy design may need to be amended to ensure that a specific principle is applied. This could include the framing of the problem, the detail of how the policy option may work, or how it may be implemented. - Embedding a principle in law or guidance. If policymakers want the principles to be used in decision-making or the implementation of a policy, this approach may be appropriate. This could be relevant where proposed legislation might include associated powers, duties or obligations that may have a significant effect on the environment. - Postponing a policy until further evidence is gained. If a policymaker is unsure on whether action is appropriate, they should gather further evidence. Applying the precautionary principle may encourage policymakers to explore the potential environmental damage before moving forwards. Or, where the risk is serious, they may amend, postpone or discontinue the policy in rare cases. 	
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<p>Clean Growth Strategy 2017</p>	<p>The Clean Growth Strategy deals specifically with the challenge of trying to grow the UKs economy whilst reducing its emissions. This issue is dealt with across multiple strategies, and several sectors have a large role to play. This strategy details the approach of each sector and sets out key policies for each.</p> <p>The guiding principles of the Clean Growth Strategy are to, through nurturing low carbon technologies, processes, and systems:</p> <p>meeting the UK’s domestic commitments at the lowest possible net cost to UK taxpayers, consumers, and businesses; and</p> <p>maximising the social and economic benefits for the UK from this transition.</p> <p>The key policies to achieve this are sorted into the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accelerating clean growth; • improving business and industry efficiency (25% of emissions); • improving our homes (13% of emissions); • accelerating the shift to low carbon transport (24% of emissions); • delivering clean, smart, flexible power (21% of emissions); • enhancing the benefits and value of our natural resources (15% of emissions); • leading in the public sector (2% of emissions); and • government leadership in driving clean growth. 	<p>AoS needs to address the importance of reducing GHG emissions, as well as the full range of air pollutants whilst maximising the social and economic benefit of the transition.</p>
<p>UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005</p>	<p>This strategy has four broad objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable consumption and production – working towards achieving more with less. 	<p>Ensure the AoS considers the full range of sustainability issues.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement • From local to global, building sustainable communities • Climate change and energy <p>Our landscapes and seascapes are inseparable from our culture, bearing the imprints of generations of land use. Our physical and mental health is reliant on the quality of the environment. There must also be access to a variety of well-managed and maintained green spaces for leisure, sport, recreation and general public benefit to help people choose healthy lifestyles, in urban as well as rural areas.</p>	
UK Shared Framework for Sustainable Development; One Future – Different Paths 2005	This framework document sets out the common goals and challenges of the UK Government and devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each devolved administration will have its own strategy document but the framework demonstrates the commitment to work together on shared goals and challenges This framework document sets out what those are, and is an affirmation that the whole of the UK will work to common goals without compromising the strengths which our diversity of approach offers.	Ensure the AoS considers the full range of sustainability issues.
The Planning Act 2008	<p>This legislation sets out how the planning system should deal with nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIP). The legislation created a regime of National Policy Statements (NPS). These NPS give reasons for the policy set out in the statement, and must include an explanation of how the policy takes account of Government policy relating to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. They include the Government's objectives for the development of nationally significant infrastructure in a particular sector and state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How this will contribute to sustainable development. • How these objectives have been integrated with other Government policies. 	The AoS should be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How actual and projected capacity and demand have been taken into account. • Consider relevant issues in relation to safety or technology. • Circumstances where it would be particularly important to address the adverse impacts of development. • Specific locations, where appropriate, in order to provide a clear framework for investment and planning decisions. <p>Each NPS sets out Government policy for the infrastructure it covers and the reasons for that policy. This includes the need for new infrastructure; the relative weight to be given to specified criteria such as the benefits of new infrastructure and the adverse impacts that it might have; and, when action should be taken to mitigate adverse impacts. NPSs can set out criteria to be used in deciding whether a location is suitable for a type of infrastructure. They can also identify specific locations that are or might be suitable or unsuitable for a type of infrastructure.</p> <p>Setting out a clear Government policy in this way establishes clear Ministerial accountability for the policy choices that underlie planning decisions on nationally significant infrastructure schemes. It also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides the primary basis for decisions by the Infrastructure Planning Commission on the applications it receives; • reduces the need for discussion at public inquiries about what is or should be Government policy – avoiding a situation in which an attempt is made to determine what the national need is on a case by case basis; and • gives prospective infrastructure providers clarity as to what proposals are or are not in line with Government policy. 	
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	<p>The Act sets out the scale of development which should be considered a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, and therefore have to be determined through the Development Consent Order process.</p> <p>This legislation introduced the independent Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC), to take decisions on major infrastructure projects (transport, energy, water and waste).</p>	
Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	<p>The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 provide an integrated framework for the regulation of activities that could harm the environment or human health. They require operators of “regulated facilities” to obtain a permit or to register some activities, which would otherwise require permits, as “exempt facilities”. They cover six main areas of environmental activity: waste regulation, emissions to the environment from industrial processes (air, water and land), water discharges, radioactive substances, energy efficiency and flood risk activities.</p> <p>The aim of the regime is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the environment so that statutory and Government policy environmental targets and outcomes are achieved. • Deliver permitting and compliance with permits and certain environmental targets effectively and efficiently in a way that provides increased clarity and minimises the administrative burden on both the regulator and the operators. • Encourage regulators to promote best practice in the operation of facilities. 	The AoS should consider the protection of the environment from water extraction and waste and pollution discharges to the environment and include appropriate objectives if necessary.
The Town and Country Planning and Infrastructure Planning (Environmental	<p>These Regulations amend the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.</p> <p>These new regulations set out the procedures to be followed in relation to environmental impact assessment linked to nationally significant infrastructure</p>	The AoS framework should consider including objectives to promote

Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2018	projects in England and Wales. The objective is to provide a high level of protection of the environment and to help integrate environmental considerations into the preparation of proposals for development to reduce their impact on the environment.	environmental impact reduction.
Localism Act 2011	<p>The Act aims to shift power from central government to the hands of individuals, communities and councils.</p> <p>Moreover, the Act aims to push power downwards and outwards to the lowest possible level, including individuals, neighbourhoods, professionals and communities as well as local councils and other local institutions.</p> <p>The Localism Act includes five key measures that underpin the Government's approach to decentralisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community rights: which ensure that community organisations have a fair chance to bid to take over land and buildings that are important to them. • Neighbourhood planning: new rights will allow local communities to shape new development by coming together to prepare neighbourhood plans. • Housing: councils will get a higher flexibility to manage their housing stock for meeting local demand. • General power of competence: local authorities will have the legal capacity to do anything an individual could do that isn't specifically prohibited. • Empowering cities and other local areas: public functions will be transferred to local authorities in order to improve local accountability or to promote economic growth. 	The AoS should seek to align with the aims of the Act to shift power to individuals, communities and councils.
Environmental Assessment of Plans	To comply with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, if it is determined that a proposed plan or programme, or a	SEA is an integral part of the NPS AoS and the AoS

and Programmes Regulations 2004	modification to an existing plan or programme, is likely to have a significant environmental effect it will need a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA).	will ensure compliance with the SEA Regulations.
Planning Practice Guidance – Natural Environment 2019	<p>Explains key issues in implementing policy to protect and enhance the natural environment, including local requirements covering:</p> <p>Agricultural land, soil and brownfield land of environmental value</p> <p>A local planning authority must consult Natural England before granting planning permission for large-scale non-agricultural development on best and most versatile land that is not in accord with the development plan. Natural England has published guidance on development on agricultural land.</p> <p>Green infrastructure</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Biodiversity, geodiversity and ecosystems</p> <p>Development plans and planning decisions have the potential to affect biodiversity or geodiversity outside as well as inside relevant designated areas.</p> <p>Planning authorities and neighbourhood planning bodies can work collaboratively with other partners, including Local Nature Partnerships, to develop and deliver a strategic approach to protecting and improving the natural environment based on local priorities and evidence. Equally, they need to consider the opportunities that individual development proposals may provide to conserve and enhance biodiversity</p>	To consider as part of identification of issues and opportunities for the NPS

	<p>and geodiversity, and contribute to habitat connectivity in the wider area (including as part of the Nature Recovery Network).</p> <p>As set out in the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan, the Nature Recovery Network is an expanding and increasingly-connected network of wildlife-rich habitat across England. It comprises a core network of designated sites of importance for biodiversity and adjoining areas that function as stepping stones or wildlife corridors, areas identified for new habitat creation and up to 25 nature recovery areas for targeted action. Defra, Natural England and other government bodies are working with national and local partnerships to deliver the Network, which includes support for developing maps and advice to show where actions to improve and restore habitats would be most effective.</p> <p>Local ecological networks can make a significant contribution to developing the Nature Recovery Network.</p> <p>Guidance on ecosystems services (the benefits people obtain from ecosystems, such as food, water, flood and disease control and recreation) and using an ecosystems approach is available. This guidance can, where appropriate, inform plan-making and decision-making on planning applications.</p> <p>Information on biodiversity and geodiversity impacts and opportunities needs to inform all stages of development (including site selection and design, pre-application consultation and the application itself). An ecological survey will be necessary in advance of a planning application if the type and location of development could have a significant impact on biodiversity and existing information is lacking or inadequate. Pre-application discussions can help to scope whether this is the case and, if so, the survey work required.</p> <p>Plans, and particularly those containing strategic policies, can be used to set out a suitable approach to both biodiversity and wider environmental net gain, how it will be</p>	
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	<p>achieved, and which areas present the best opportunities to deliver gains. Such areas could include those identified in: natural capital plans; local biodiversity opportunity or ecological network maps; local green infrastructure strategies; strategic flood risk assessments; water cycle studies; air quality management plans; river basin management plans; and strategic protected species licensing areas. Consideration may also be given to local sites including where communities could benefit from improved access to nature.</p> <p>Landscape</p> <p>The 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. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.</p> <p>Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed. Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures, such as appropriate design principles and visual screening, where necessary. The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully.</p>	
Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023	This act introduces wide-ranging reforms to the planning system including the introduction of National Development Management Policy (NDMP) amendments to the local and neighbourhood planning Nationally Significant Infrastructure (NSIP) process, and the Infrastructure Levy.	The AoS should be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Act.
BIODIVERSITY		

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Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	<p>An Act prohibiting and limiting actions involving wild animals, and the primary piece of legislation for wildlife protection in the UK. Prohibitions include taking, injuring, killing and disturbing. It is also an offence to disturb places used for shelter and protection.</p> <p>The Act [inter alia] prohibits certain methods of killing or taking wild animals; amends the law relating to protection of certain mammals; restricts the introduction of certain animals and plants; amends the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act 1976; amends the law relating to nature conservation, the countryside and National Parks; and amends the law relating to public rights of way.</p>	Ensure that wildlife protection covered within AoS framework.
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act)	<p>This Act contains five Parts and 16 Schedules and provides for public access on foot to certain types of land, amends the law relating to public rights of way, increases measures for the management and protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and strengthens wildlife enforcement legislation, and provides for better management of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).</p> <p>The Act is compliant with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights, requiring consultation where the rights of the individual may be affected by these measures.</p>	Ensure that public access to the countryside and protection of AONB is considered as part of the AoS framework.
Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	<p>The regulations consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 in respect of England and Wales. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European sites', the protection of 'European protected species', and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European Sites.</p> <p>This legislation aims to protect and conserve natural habitats and species of European importance in the UK (the legislation relates to England and Wales only). It makes it an offence to deliberately capture, injure, or kill a species or well as to</p>	Ensure protection of protected sites and species in AoS Framework.

	damage or destroy a breeding or resting place in Schedule 2 of the Regulations or deliberately pick, collect, cut uproot or destroy plant species in Schedule 5.	
The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	<p>The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2017 implement the species protection requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives offshore (more than 12 nautical miles from the coast).</p> <p>The Offshore Marine Regulations apply to the offshore marine area, offshore marine installation and certain ships and crafts.</p>	Ensure consideration and protection of all designated offshore sites.
National Pollinator Strategy 2014-2024	<p>It is recognised that Pollinators face many pressures which have led to declines in numbers, and a reduction in the diversity of species to be found in many parts of the country.</p> <p>As a response, DEFRA developed the National Pollinator Strategy, which over the years 2014-2024 aims to build a solid foundation to bring about the best possible conditions for bees and other insects to flourish. This will fulfil the vision of the Strategy which is to see pollinators thrive so that they can carry out their essential service to people of pollinating flowers and crops, while providing other benefits for native plants, the wider environment, food production and all of us.</p>	Ensure the protection of bees and other insects within the AoS.
The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019	The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 ensures an enforcement regime is in place to enforce the Principal EU Regulation (1143/2014) in England and Wales, which is designed to prevent, minimise or mitigate the adverse impact of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species.	Ensure AoS considers introduction and spread of invasive alien species.

<p>The Great Britain Invasive Non-native Species Strategy 2023</p>	<p>Invasive Non-native Species are one of the top five drivers of biodiversity loss globally. They threaten Great Britain’s ability to meet wider environmental targets and respond to climate change.</p> <p>Strategy sets out aims to guide collaboration between government, voluntary organisations, NGOs, researchers, businesses and the public to 2030.</p>	<p>Ensure the AoS considers the potential for the spread of INNS.</p>
<p>National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949</p>	<p>The Act established powers to declare National Nature Reserves (NNRs); to notify sites of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) and for local authorities to establish Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).</p> <p>These provisions were strengthened by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. An NNR is an area which is among the best examples of a particular habitat. NNRs are of national importance. They are in many cases owned and managed by the statutory authority, (for example English Nature), but not always. An NNR, unlike an SSSI, has to be managed appropriately to retain its special status.</p>	<p>Ensure protection of sites designated for nature conservation at the national and local level in the AoS framework.</p>
<p>Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006</p>	<p>Section 40 of the Act is amended by the Environment Act 2021 which introduced a strengthened ‘biodiversity duty’. Public authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.</p> <p>This means that, as a public authority, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider what you can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. • Agree policies and specific objectives based on your consideration. • Act to deliver your policies and achieve your objectives <p>You must meet the biodiversity duty if you are a public authority, such as a:</p>	<p>Ensure biodiversity conservation within AoS framework.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government department or public body • local authority or local planning authority • statutory undertaker – a business that has public authority duties for their land and delivers something of public importance 	
<p>The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review, 2021</p>	<p>Headline messages:</p> <p>We have collectively failed to engage with Nature sustainably, to the extent that our demands far exceed its capacity to supply us with the goods and services we all rely on.</p> <p>Our unsustainable engagement with Nature is endangering the prosperity of current and future generations. Biodiversity is declining faster than at any time in human history. Current extinction rates, for example, are around 100 to 1,000 times higher than the baseline rate, and they are increasing. Such declines are undermining Nature’s productivity, resilience and adaptability, and are in turn fuelling extreme risk and uncertainty for our economies and well-being.</p> <p>At the heart of the problem lies deep-rooted, widespread institutional failure. Nature’s worth to society – the true value of the various goods and services it provides – is not reflected in market prices because much of it is open to all at no monetary charge. These pricing distortions have led us to invest relatively more in other assets, such as produced capital, and underinvest in our natural assets. Moreover, aspects of Nature are mobile; some are invisible, such as in the soils; and many are silent. Governments almost everywhere exacerbate the problem by paying people more to exploit Nature than to protect it, and to prioritise unsustainable economic activities.</p> <p>The solution starts with understanding and accepting a simple truth: our economies are embedded within Nature, not external to it.</p>	<p>The AoS should reflect the fact that current demands on Nature far exceed its capacity to supply us with the goods and services we all rely on.</p>

	<p>We need to change how we think, act and measure success. The change required should be geared towards three broad transitions.</p> <p>Ensure that our demands on Nature do not exceed its supply, and that we increase Nature’s supply relative to its current level.</p> <p>Change our measures of economic success to guide us on a more sustainable path.</p> <p>Transform our institutions and systems – in particular our finance and education systems – to enable these changes and sustain them for future generations.</p>	
National Forest Inventory	<p>This programme monitors woodland and trees within Great Britain. It includes the most in depth survey carried out on Britain’s woodland and trees to date. The NFI provides an extensive and unique record of key information about our forests and woodlands. Woodland surveys and compiled forest inventories have been carried out at 10-15 year intervals since 1924.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider this inventory.</p>
Hedgerow Regulations 1997	<p>These regulations introduce new arrangements for local planning authorities in England and Wales, with the aim to protect important hedgerows in the countryside, by controlling their removal through a system of notification.</p>	<p>Consider the protection of important hedgerows within the AoS.</p>
UK Peatland Strategy 2018	<p>The UK Peatland Strategy aims to drive and co-ordinate action across the UK, supported by country level plans that will establish a course for peatland conservation and management at a more detailed level. This strategy recognises there are different peatlands and types of pressures within the UK and seeks to provide common goals across the four devolved administrations of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.</p> <p>The Strategy has the 2040 vision of ‘ Our peatlands are protected, enhanced, sustainably managed and are recognised for their intrinsic value and the public</p>	<p>The AoS must consider the protection and restoration of peatland.</p>

	benefits they provide’ and the 2040 target of ‘ Two million hectares of peatland in good condition, under restoration or being sustainably managed by 2040’.	
UK Biodiversity Framework (UKBF) 2024	<p>This renewed UKBF refreshes the “broad enabling structure” of the 2012 framework in the context of the new commitments by:</p> <p>Setting out the shared objectives for co-operation and collaboration between the four countries of the UK;</p> <p>Establishing a governance structure for overseeing and achieving the shared objectives.</p> <p>The UK is committed to taking positive action and is party to Multilateral Environmental Agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. The Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, agreed at the COP 15 sets out its purpose as ‘aiming to catalyze, enable and galvanize urgent and transformative action by Governments, and subnational and local authorities, with the involvement of all of society, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, to achieve the outcomes it sets out in its Vision, Mission, Goals and Targets...’ (Convention on Biological Diversity 2022).</p> <p>This UK Biodiversity Framework sets out four objectives for cross-UK work relating to biodiversity policy and supporting evidence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To contribute to informing and developing the UK’s position in international agreements and policy making. 2. To coordinate collective achievement of the UK’s international obligations. 	The AoS must consider the protection and restoration of biodiversity.

	<p>3. To enable and support country input to reporting required under the UK’s international obligations.</p> <p>4. To inform each other of domestic policy developments and collaborate to achieve shared aims where there is benefit in doing so at a UK level.</p>	
UK National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2025	<p>NBSAPs are the main instrument for planning the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the national level.</p> <p>The UK NBSAP for 2030 draws on the commitments made by the UK, the UK Overseas Territories, and Crown Dependencies to summarise and emphasise our collective ambition and determination to work together to address biodiversity loss. The UK NBSAP commits the UK to achieving all 23 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets at home. that include actions that need to be initiated immediately and completed by 2030.</p> <p>The UK submitted a set of 23 National Targets to the CBD on 1st August 2024. These sit alongside the NBSAP and include a subset of country-level commitments to illustrate the actions by which the GBF will be delivered in the UK.</p>	The AoS must consider the protection of biodiversity.
JNCC guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance in the marine environment	<p>These guidelines outline measures to minimise potential injury from the clearance through detonation of unexploded ordnance (UXO) in the marine environment. Separate guidance is provided for when using explosives for other purposes (e.g. decommissioning). The aim of these guidelines is to reduce the risk of deliberate or reckless injury to marine mammals to as low as reasonably possible by outlining relevant measures that can be implemented as part of consenting regimes for UXO clearance works within UK seas.</p>	The AoS must consider the protection of the marine environment.

AIR QUALITY		
Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 as amended by The Air Quality (Amendment of Domestic Regulations) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	These regulations set legally binding limits for concentrations in outdoor air of major air pollutants that impact public health such as particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO2). As well as having direct effects, these pollutants can combine in the atmosphere to form ozone, a harmful air pollutant (and potent greenhouse gas) which can be transported great distances by weather systems. It also incorporates the 4th air quality daughter directive that sets targets for levels in outdoor air of certain toxic heavy metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.	Ensure the inclusion of major air pollutants that impact human health within the AoS framework.
<p>Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland 2007</p> <p>Air Quality Strategy: framework for local authority delivery</p>	This Air Quality Strategy sets out air quality objectives and policy options to further improve air quality in the UK from today into the long term. As well as direct benefits to public health, these options are intended to provide important benefits to quality of life and help to protect our environment.	Ensure the inclusion of an air quality objective within the AoS framework.
Clean Air Strategy 2019	<p>The Clean Air Strategy explains how the UK Government will tackle all sources of air pollution, sets out policy direction, and outlines measures that will drive the move to zero emission transport modes. The strategy links into other national level policies, outlining the same targets and strategies across multiple documents.</p> <p>The strategy includes numerous aims and goals, many drawn from other policy documents, that are collated in brief in the executive summary. These are framed in the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shifting to “cleaner” energy sources (e.g. phasing out coal-fired power stations) 	Ensure the inclusion of an air quality objective dealing with the topics of cleaner energy sources, protection of health, protection of the environment, reduce emissions from transport,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting the nation’s health; • protecting the environment; • securing clean growth and innovation; • action to reduce emissions from transport; • action to reduce emissions at home; • action to reduce emissions from farming; • action to reduce emissions from industry; and • leadership at all levels. <p>The Clean Air Strategy effectively summarises government policy with an impact on air quality from multiple different areas. Multiple government initiatives are listed where action has been taken by central government. Of particular importance, and reinforced by the Clean Air Strategy, is the adoption of challenging and enforceable local Air Quality Strategies.</p>	homes and industry within the AoS framework.
Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide in the UK, 2017	<p>Jointly produced by the DfT and DEFRA, this national plan determines an approach for areas with the worst levels of traffic-related air pollution to mitigate the effects. It sets out the framework for Clean Air Zones, allowing for targeted action to improve air quality in the “shortest possible time” as required by legal obligations to meet NO2 concentration thresholds.</p> <p>The document also sets out plans for ending the sale of new, conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040. The plan argues that NO2 accumulation is a local issue, as the pollutants do not disperse widely like greenhouse gasses. In line with this local approach, the plan sets out support to local authorities, including:</p> <p>setting up a £255 million Implementation Fund;</p>	Ensure the inclusion of meeting NO2 concentration thresholds within the AoS framework.

	<p>establishing a Clean Air Fund; and</p> <p>providing £100m for retrofitting and new low emission buses.</p> <p>The plan outlines the introduction of several new funding streams that local authorities can utilise to finance measures to reduce NO2 emissions.</p>	
<p>Air Pollution: Action in a Changing Climate (Defra, 2010)</p>	<p>The key messages from this document are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a link between air pollution and climate change as these originate from similar activities, for example; • transport and electricity generation. These links should be considered when managing policy; • The UK's commitment to build a low carbon economy by 2050 will reduce air pollution but choices made to achieve; • this will impact upon the extent of air quality improvements; • Air quality/climate change co-benefits could be achieved by promoting actions such as low-carbon vehicles; <p>However, benefits for climate change may have negative impacts on air pollution and vice versa which need to be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Action will be required at international, national, regional and local levels to ensure that policies regarding air pollution and climate change are aligned to maximise co-benefits.</p>	<p>The AoS framework should consider including objectives which seek to limit air pollution and reduce the impacts of air pollution on climate change.</p>
<p>The National Emission Ceilings Regulations 2018</p>	<p>These Regulations implement in the United Kingdom Directive 2016/2284/EU of the European Parliament and the Council relating to national emission ceilings or certain atmospheric pollutants. The Regulations require the Secretary of State to prepare an</p>	<p>Ensure that limitation of emissions of pollutants is addressed within the AoS</p>

	annual inventory of emissions of certain pollutants and to ensure in each year from 2020 until 2029 anthropogenic emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter occurring within the United Kingdom do not exceed the national emission reduction commitments.	framework through the inclusion of an appropriate objective.
CLIMATE CHANGE		
Climate Change Act 2008 and its 2050 Target Amendment Order, 2019	<p>The Act aims to improve carbon management, helping the transition towards a low-carbon economy in the UK and to demonstrate UK leadership internationally. Key provisions of the Act include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a legally binding target of at least an 80% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and a reduction in emissions of at least 34% by 2020 (both against 1990 baseline). Note the 2050 target has now been amended to Net Zero • a carbon budgeting system that caps emissions over five-year periods; • creation of the Committee on Climate Change; • further measures to reduce emissions, including measures on biofuels; • a requirement for the Government to report at least every five years on the risks to the UK of climate change, and to publish a programme setting out how these will be addressed. <p>The Act also introduces powers for Government to require public bodies and statutory undertakers to carry out their own risk assessment and make plans to address those risks</p>	Ensure that reduction of greenhouse emissions is addressed within the AoS framework through the inclusion of an appropriate objective.
UK Net Zero Strategy 2021	The UK's new Net Zero Strategy sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet the net zero target by 2050. It sets out, how the UK Government plans to deliver its emissions targets of Net Zero in 2050 and a 78%	The AoS must be guided by this important overarching strategy to

	<p>reduction from 1990 to 2035 (-63% relative to 2019). It puts forward an achievable and affordable vision that will bring net benefits to the UK.</p> <p>Government sets out that the exact technology and energy mix in 2050 cannot be known now, and the path to net zero will respond to the innovation and adoption of new technologies over time. It is expected to rely on the following key green technologies and energy carriers, which interact to meet demand across sectors and to remain low carbon:</p> <p>Electricity from low carbon generation and storage technologies meets higher demand for low carbon power in buildings, industry, transport, and agriculture.</p> <p>Hydrogen can complement the electricity system, especially in harder to electrify areas like parts of industry and heating, and in heavier transport such as aviation and shipping. A range of low carbon production methods could be used.</p> <p>Carbon capture usage and storage (CCUS) can capture CO₂ from power generation, hydrogen production, and industrial processes – storing it underground or using it. This technology also supports negative emissions from engineered greenhouse gas removals – bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) and Direct Air Carbon Capture and Storage (DACCS).</p> <p>Biomass combined with CCUS can remove carbon from the atmosphere and support low carbon electricity and hydrogen generation. Biomass and other wastes can also support low carbon fuels for industry, buildings, and transport.</p>	<p>meet the net zero target by 2050.</p>
The Road to Zero 2018	<p>The Road to Zero strategy is a broad governmental “next steps” policy that outlines an ambition to decarbonise transport, and to strengthen the UK’s offering in design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles, and the role of zero emission road</p>	<p>AoS needs to recognise the importance of decarbonising transport.</p>

	<p>vehicles in the government’s Industrial Strategy. The strategy is aligned to other national policies mentioned in this section.</p> <p>The policy sets targets for 50-70% of new car sales, and up to 40% of new van sales to be ultra-low emission by 2030. To support this, emphasis is given to several key policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing emissions from the vehicles already on our roads; • driving the uptake of the cleanest vehicles; • reducing emissions from heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and road freight; • putting the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles; and • supporting the development of one of the best electric vehicle infrastructure networks in the world • supporting local actions. <p>The strategy sets out in detail the challenges brought about by the emissions of road transport, and the specifics of how different types of road transport produce these emissions. The strategy also acknowledges the difficulty in maintaining a required level of road use for vital travel, commerce, and services, whilst restricting vehicle choice. Given the significant consequences of failing to act to reduce emissions, the report strikes a balance to prioritise reductions in emissions and maintain economic growth.</p> <p>Although the strategy refers to changes in travel modes for certain types of journeys, the emphasis of the report lies with maintaining a required level of road travel, with reductions in emissions achieved through encouraging a high proportion of low-emission vehicles on the roads.</p>	
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UKCP18	<p>The UK Climate Projections (UKCP) provides the most up-to-date assessment of how the UK climate may change in the future. UKCP18 provides a new set of climate projections and tools to access climate data. The major innovations in UKCP18 include the use of new observations of weather and climate, inclusion of a more recent generation of climate models from around the world and the results from latest Met Office global and regional climate models.</p> <p>The projections can then be used to inform guidance such as the Environment Agency's guidance on flood risk assessment.</p>	The AoS framework should promote an improved resilience to climate change.
Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy 2021	<p>The aim of this strategy is to show how the UK can have a thriving industrial sector aligned with the net zero target, without pushing emissions and business abroad, and how government will act to support this. This strategy is part of a series of publications from government, which combined show how the net zero transition will take place across the whole UK economy.</p> <p>The strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show how the UK can have a thriving industrial sector aligned with the net zero target, without pushing emissions and business abroad • show how and when government will act to support this, while sharing the costs and risks fairly between industry, its customers and the taxpayer • start a conversation with industry, its workforce, customers and communities about the future of industry in a net zero world. <p>The strategy identifies that beyond electricity generation, nuclear may also play a role in the provision of process heat to industry.</p>	The AoS should consider including objectives that address the reduction of carbon emissions, as well as objectives that promote the transformation to a low carbon industrial sector.

<p>National Infrastructure Strategy 2020</p>	<p>The National Infrastructure Strategy sets out the government’s plans to transform the UK’s infrastructure networks. It is based around three central objectives: economic recovery; levelling up and strengthening the Union; and meeting the UK’s net zero emissions target by 2050. This will be enabled by clear support for private investment and through a comprehensive set of reforms to the way infrastructure is delivered.</p> <p>This Strategy sets out early actions that the government will take to build the infrastructure needed to achieve net zero, improve air quality, create a greener urban environment, and minimise the impact of flooding.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider including objectives that address GHG emissions reduction, as well as promote the transformation to an energy-efficient low carbon economy.</p>
<p>National Infrastructure Assessment 2023</p>	<p>The Assessment analyses the UK’s long-term economic infrastructure needs, outlining a strategic vision over the next 30 years and setting out recommendations for how identified needs should be met. The Assessment provides a long term strategy for how to adapt the UK’s infrastructure to deal with the pressures of climate change.</p>	<p>Ensure that adaptation of infrastructure to climate change is addressed within the AoS framework.</p>
<p>UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022, Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 56 of the Climate Change Act 2008</p>	<p>The UK government is required to undertake an assessment of the risks from climate change faced by the UK every five years under the Climate Change Act 2008. The third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) identifies sixty-one UK-wide climate risks and opportunities that cross-cut multiple sectors of the economy. The potential impact of these risks includes changes to health and productivity, and disruption to households, businesses and public services. Estimated damages caused by climate change could be at least 1% of GDP by 2045 and the report highlights that more action is needed in the majority of risk areas to increase resilience and reduce the costs associated with climate change. Decision making, such as for new housing or infrastructure, should consider the effects of climate change to avoid the need for costly remedial actions later and this should include low probability, high impact events, and interdependent or cascading risks</p>	<p>Ensure that assessment of risks and opportunities from climate change is addressed within the AoS Framework.</p>

<p>The Third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3) and the Fourth Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting 2023, Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 58 of the Climate Change Act 2008</p>	<p>NAP3</p> <p>Every 5 years, the government produces an assessment of the risks and opportunities from climate change and reports on how we will adapt in the NAP. This approach to climate adaptation is world leading, placing the UK at the forefront of global efforts to manage climate risk.</p> <p>NAP3 explains the government's plans to adapt to climate change over the next 5 years from 2023 to 2028, including: protecting the natural environment; supporting business in adapting to climate change; adapting infrastructure (for example, our electricity networks and railways); protecting buildings and their surroundings (for example, from hotter temperatures); protecting public health and communities; mitigating international impacts on the UK (for example, on food supplies imported from abroad).</p> <p>The Climate Change Act and the Climate Change (Scotland) Act require Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland to have their own plans for climate adaptation. These plans are closely aligned, and Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland have contributed to NAP3.</p> <p>Climate Adaptation Reporting</p> <p>The government's strategy for the fourth round of climate adaptation reporting under the Adaptation Reporting Power (ARP). ARP was introduced under the CCA 2008. It gives the Secretary of State the power to direct organisations with functions of a public nature and statutory undertakers to produce reports detailing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the current and future projected impacts of climate change on their organisation • proposals for adapting to climate change 	<p>The AoS should consider how infrastructure planning aligns with short term plans by UK Government, and how adaption measures within the NAP can be supported</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an assessment of progress towards implementing the policies and proposals set out in previous reports <p>Reporting is usually undertaken in a 5-yearly cycle. Following strong support for the proposals in our consultation, the fourth round of reporting will be undertaken to a different timescale than previous rounds. This will improve the alignment of adaptation reporting with other elements of the statutory framework for climate change adaptation. The closing date for the next round will therefore be brought forward to late 2024 (from 2026). After this, reporting will return to its 5-yearly cycle.</p>	
Climate Change: Second national adaptation programme (2018-2023)	<p>The second National Adaptation Programme (NAP) sets out government's response to the second Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA), showing the actions government is, and will be, taking to address the risks and opportunities posed by a changing climate. It sets out the key actions needed in relation to the following six priority areas of climate change risks for the UK;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural environment; • Reducing pressures from spreading diseases and non-native invasive species; • Infrastructure; • People and the built environment; • Business and industry; and • Local government. 	The AoS should consider objectives which promote resilience to the impacts of climate change.
Planning Practice Guidance – Climate Change 2019	<p>Advises how planning can identify suitable mitigation and adaptation measures in plan-making and the planning application process to address the potential impacts of climate change. The role of planning in supporting the delivery of appropriately sited renewable or low-carbon energy is specifically addressed.</p>	Ensure that climate change resilience is addressed within the AoS framework through the

		inclusion of an appropriate objective.
Climate, people, places and value Design principles for national infrastructure, National Infrastructure Commission, 2021	<p>The design principles for national infrastructure are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change: The design of our infrastructure must help set the trajectory for the UK to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 or sooner. • Good infrastructure is designed for the benefit of people and will plan for future changes in demographics and population. • Provide a sense of identity and improve our environment: Well-designed infrastructure supports the natural and built environment. Projects should seek to deliver a net biodiversity gain, contributing to the restoration of wildlife on a large scale while protecting irreplaceable natural assets and habitats. • Achieve multiple benefits and solve problems well: • Good design finds opportunities to add value beyond the main purpose of the infrastructure. 	Design principles for national infrastructure are important considerations for the AoS framework
Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk, Committee on Climate Change 2021	<p>Provides the advice to Government on priorities for the forthcoming national adaptation plans and wider action. It is informed by extensive new evidence gathered for the accompanying Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) Technical Report. More than 60 risks and opportunities have been identified, fundamental to every aspect of life in the UK covering natural environment, health, homes, infrastructure, and the economy.</p> <p>The Committee identifies eight risk areas that require the most urgent attention in the next two years:</p>	The AoS needs to consider relevant areas of climate change risk as set out in the independent assessment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks to the viability and diversity of terrestrial and freshwater habitats and species from multiple hazards • Risks to soil health from increased flooding and drought • Risks to natural carbon stores and sequestration from multiple hazards leading to increased emissions • Risks to crops, livestock and commercial trees from multiple hazards • Risks to supply of food, goods and vital services due to climate-related collapse of supply chains and distribution networks • Risks to people and the economy from climate-related failure of the power system • Risks to human health, wellbeing and productivity from increased exposure to heat in homes and other buildings • Multiple risks to the UK from climate change impacts overseas <p>Ten principles for good adaptation planning that should form the basis for the next round of national adaptation plans are also recommended. These are intended to bring adaptation into mainstream consideration by government and business.</p>	
HERITAGE		
Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953	This Act provides for the preservation and acquisition of buildings of outstanding historic or architectural interest and their contents and related property, and to amend the law relating to ancient monuments and other objects of archaeological interest.	The AoS should consider risks to historic buildings and ancient monuments

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Heritage Protection for the 21st Century 2007	<p>The paper sets out a vision of a unified and simpler heritage protection system, which will have more opportunities for public involvement and community engagement. The proposed system will be more open, accountable and transparent. It will offer all those with an interest in the historic environment a clearer record of what is protected and why; it will enable people who own or manage historic buildings and sites to have a better understanding of what features are important; it will streamline the consent procedures and create a more consultative and collaborative protection system.</p> <p>It is predominantly aimed for England and Wales with some UK wide elements.</p>	Ensure historic environment protection within AoS framework.
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	<p>Under the Act a monument which has been scheduled is protected against any disturbance including unlicensed metal detecting.</p> <p>Permission must be obtained for any work which might affect a monument above or below ground. Historic England gives advice to the Government on each application. In assessing an application, the Secretary of State will try to ensure any works on protected sites are beneficial to the site or are essential for its long-term sustainability.</p>	Ensure protection of ancient monuments and archaeological areas within AoS framework.
Protection of Military Remains Act 1986	<p>The Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 prohibits entering and tampering with wrecked military vessels or aircraft. All military aircraft is automatically protected under this legislation, but vessels need to be designated individually. The Act enabled the government to establish controlled sites around wrecks in UK water or protected places for those in international water. The legislation is administered by the Ministry of Defence.</p>	Ensure protection of wrecked military vessels or aircraft within AoS framework.
National Heritage Act 1983 (as amended 2002)	<p>The 1983 Act established the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission and delegated the functions of scheduling of ancient monuments and listing of historic buildings. The National Heritage Act 2002 broadened the powers of Historic England in two ways. It allowed Historic England to become involved in underwater</p>	Ensure protection of ancient monuments and historic buildings and

	archaeology in English territorial water and to trade in overseas countries. These powers have now been transferred to Historic England.	underwater archaeology within AoS framework.
The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973	The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 allows the Government to designate a restricted area around the site of a vessel lying on or in the seabed in UK territorial waters if they are satisfied that, on account of the historical, archaeological or artistic importance of the vessel, or its contents or former contents, the site ought to be protected from unauthorised interference.	Ensure protection of designated wrecks within AoS framework.
Heritage Statement: One Year On (2018)	This heritage statement sets out how the government will support the heritage sector and help it to protect and care for our heritage and historic environment in the coming years, in order to maximise the economic and social impact of heritage and to ensure that everyone can enjoy and benefit from it. It also provides progress updates from the Government Heritage Statement 2017, and areas to deliver further change in the future.	Ensure protection of heritage and historic environment within AoS framework.
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	Governs special controls in respect of buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. Any alteration, extension or demolition of a listed building in a way that affects its character as a building of special interest requires Listed Building Consent.	Ensure protection of listed buildings within AoS framework.
LANDSCAPE		
National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949	This was an act that made provision for National Parks and the establishment of a National Parks Commission. It was also to confer on the Nature Conservancy and local authorities' powers for the establishment and maintenance of nature reserves, it made further provision for the recording, creation, maintenance and improvement of	Ensure protection of national parks and improvements of public paths included within the AoS framework.

	public paths and for securing access to open country and to amend laws relating to rights of way.	
Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 (and subsequent amendments)	<p>This Act set up the Broads Authority to manage the Broads for the purposes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Broads • Promoting opportunities for understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Broads by the public • Protecting the interests of navigation. <p>The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 also documents the Authority's need to regard the needs of agriculture and forestry, and the economic and social interests of those who live or work in the Broads</p>	Although the NPS will be 'non locational' there is a need to ensure protection of areas such as The Broads.
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) normally gives a public right of access to land mapped as 'open country' (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land. These areas are known as 'open access land'. Activities such as sight seeing are enabled by this Act.	Ensure that the issue of protecting Rights of Way and access to open space is considered in the AoS.
WATER ENVIRONMENT		
Water Resources Act 1991	<p>This Act aims to prevent and minimise pollution of water. The policing of this act is the responsibility of the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales. Under the act it is an offence to cause or knowingly permit any poisonous, noxious or polluting material, or any solid waste to enter any controlled water.</p> <p>Silt and soil from eroded areas are included in the definition of polluting material. If eroded soil is found to be polluting a water body or watercourse, the Environment</p>	Ensure that water quality protection and enhancement and water availability is included within the AoS framework.

	Agency may prevent or clear up the pollution, and recover the damages from the landowner or responsible person	
Water Act 2003	<p>This act focuses on water resource management, conservation, and protection of consumer interests, The four broad aims of the Act are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the sustainable use of water resources; • strengthening the voice of consumers; • a measured increase in competition; and • the promotion of water conservation. <p>The Act amends the Water Resources Act 1991 to improve long-term water resource management by: creating two new forms of abstraction licence; regulating anew abstraction and irrigation rights; empowering the Environment Agency to revoke or vary an abstraction licence without compensation if it has not been used for four years; and removing the entitlement to compensation if the Secretary of State directs that a licence without a time limit should be curtailed on the grounds of serious environmental damage.</p> <p>It also amends the Water Industry Act 1991 so as to require water companies to prepare and publicise drought plans, to agree on and publicise water resource management plans and to further water conservation.</p>	Ensure that the issue of water resources is addressed within the AoS.
Water Industry Act 1991	<p>This Act sets out the main powers and duties of the water and sewerage companies, thus replacing those set out in the Water Act 1989, and defined the powers of the Director General of Water Services (now the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)). This Act sets out the duties for water companies in England and Wales including the need for supply licensing, as well as water resources management plans and general supply duties.</p>	Ensure that the issue of water resources is addressed within the AoS.

The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017	Looks at the ecological health of surface water bodies as well as traditional chemical standards. In particular, it will help deal with, amongst others diffuse pollution, habitat, ecology, hydromorphology, barriers to fish movement, water quality, flow and sediment. The core aim of the Water Framework Directive is to protect the UK's water environments by preventing their deterioration and improving their quality. It does this by setting ecological targets and environmental objectives. Successful implementation will help to protect all elements of the water cycle and enhance the quality of our groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuaries and seas.	The AoS should consider objectives of preventing and improvement of the quality of the water environment.
Flood and Water Management Act 2010	This act provides for a better, more comprehensive management of flood risk for people, homes and businesses, helps safeguard community groups from unaffordable rises in surface water drainage charges and protects water supplies to the consumer. The key concepts include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management; • Strategies for Natural flood and coastal erosion; • The establishment of regional flood and coastal communities. 	Ensure that management of flood risk for the benefit of people, homes and businesses within the AoS framework.
River Basin Management Plans	These plans set out how organizations, stakeholders and communities will work together to improve the water environment. A RBD covers an entire river system, including river, lake, groundwater, estuarine and coastal water bodies and are designed to protect and improve the quality of the water environment.	Ensure that water quality protection and enhancement is included within the AoS framework.
Shoreline Management Plans & Guidance 2006	Shoreline management plans (SMP) provide a long-term strategic plan which identify approaches for managing the flood and coastal erosion risks at every stretch of coastline. Shoreline management plans are developed and owned by the local councils and coastal protection authorities, with members mainly from local councils, Natural England, the MMO and the Environment Agency. There are 22 SMP's covering England and Wales. They identify the most sustainable approach to	Ensure that flood and coastal erosion risks to the coastline are included as an objective within the AoS framework.

	<p>managing the flood and coastal erosion risks to the coastline in the short term (0-20 years), medium term (20-50 years) and long term (50-100 years). They are long term non-statutory plans which set out the agreed high-level objective for coastal flooding and erosion management for each SMP area. There are 20 SMPs which cover the English coast.</p> <p>2006 Guidance</p> <p>Managing the shoreline involves identifying the best ways to manage risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment, and how to put these into practice. A range of responses is available for managing risks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removing risks by avoiding or moving inappropriate development in vulnerable areas (such as through planning how land is used); • reducing the likelihood of damaging events through management work that prevents damage (such as managing beaches, cliffs, dunes, saltmarshes and so on) or using back-up and secondary defence systems (such as for tidal defence); • reducing the consequences of risks by providing early-warning systems (such as flood warning systems operated by the Environment Agency); and • reducing the risks associated with potentially damaging events through flood and coastal defence schemes or altering buildings to reduce the chance of flood damage. <p>The most appropriate measures will depend on the problem, and on technical, environmental, social and economic circumstances. Some of these approaches are not covered by shoreline management. However, in many cases the response will involve a combination of measures including, for example, working with local planning authorities to achieve the same objectives.</p>	
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Flood Risk Management Plans	<p>Flood risk management plans explain the risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, surface water, groundwater and reservoirs. FRMPs set out how risk management authorities will work with communities to manage flood risk between 2021-2027. They must cover areas of the river basin district (RBD) where flood risk is significant. These areas are called flood risk areas (FRAs). The Environment Agency and lead local flood authorities (LLFAs) identify FRAs through preliminary flood risk assessments.</p> <p>FRMPs also meet the aims of the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Strategy for England.</p>	Ensure that risk of flooding from sea, surface water, groundwater and reservoirs is included within the AoS framework.
Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975	Created to protect particularly salmon and trout from commercial poaching, to protect migration routes, to prevent wilful vandalism and neglect of fishery's and to ensure correct licensing and water authority approval. Part II of the Act deals with obstructions to the passage of fish, including fishing weirs, screens and sluices; dictating when and where they can be used. Part III explains the proper times of fishing, selling and exporting fish.	The AoS should consider protection of salmon and freshwater fish.
Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009	These regulations afford powers to the Environment Agency and Natural Resource Wales to implement measures for the recovery of European eel stocks all freshwater and estuarine waters and have important implications for operators of abstractions and discharges.	The AoS should consider protection and enhancement of freshwater and estuarine waters as a habitat for eels.
Fisheries Act 2020	The Fisheries Act will enable the UK to control who fishes in their waters through a new foreign vessel licencing regime and ends the current automatic rights for EU vessels to fish in UK waters.	The AoS should give particular regard to sustainable management of fisheries.

	Underpinning the Act is a commitment to sustainability, ensuring that fish and aquaculture activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term. The UK Government and Devolved Administrations are required to develop new fisheries management plans for managing fisheries to benefit the fishing industry and the marine environment.	
Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009	<p>This includes a marine planning system, which makes provision for a statement of the Government's general policies, and the general policies of each of the devolved administrations, for the marine environment, and also for marine plans which set out in more detail what is to happen in the different parts of the areas to which they relate. Welsh Ministers are the marine licensing authority in Wales, and the administration and determination of marine licenses has been delegated to NRW.</p> <p>Key areas of the Act include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Marine Management Organisation under which many of the existing, diverse areas of marine regulation are centralised; • streamlined the marine licensing system and provides powers to create joined-up marine planning policy; • introduced measures to reform fisheries management; • provided a framework for establishing marine conservation zones; • enabled the creation of a walkable route around the English and Welsh coast. 	The AoS should seek to align with the aims of the Act and protect the marine and coastal environment.
The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007	The regulations requires that certain types of project with the potential to significantly affect the environment have an environmental impact assessment before a marine licence decision is made.	The AoS should consider where EIAs are required if projects have the potential to significantly affect the environment.

<p>UK Marine Policy Statement 2011</p>	<p>The Marine Policy Statement (MPS) is the framework for preparing Marine Plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment. The MPS will facilitate and support the formulation of Marine Plans, ensuring that marine resources are used in a sustainable way in line with the high level marine objectives and thereby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote sustainable economic development; • Enable the UK's move towards a low-carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects; • Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and our heritage assets; and • Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues. 	<p>The AoS framework should consider sustainable use of the marine environment, in particular relating to water quality and use of the coastal zone.</p>
<p>Marine strategy part one: UK updated assessment and Good Environmental Status, 2019</p>	<p>This strategy provides an updated assessment of our seas and sets objectives, targets and indicators for achieving Good Environmental Status.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider objectives, targets and indicators for achieving Good Environmental Status in the marine environment.</p>
<p>Marine Strategy Part 2, 2021</p>	<p>This updated UK Marine Strategy Part Two sets out the monitoring programmes that we propose to use to provide the evidence to support the 2024 assessment of progress towards achieving GES within the UK Marine Strategy area.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider marine monitoring indicators set out on the Marine Strategy.</p>

Marine strategy part three: UK programme of measures	This strategy outlines the measures that contribute towards Good Environmental Status (GES) in UK seas.	The AoS should consider the measures that contribute towards Good Environmental Status in the UK seas.
Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations 1994	<p>These regulations require Defra to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publish a situation report on the disposal of urban wastewater and sludge • assess compliance with these regulations in each agglomeration (each area where wastewater is collected to be treated or discharged) • publish a report on the level of that compliance, identified reasons for non-compliance, and proposed measures to achieve compliance with these regulations 	The AoS should consider the disposal of urban wastewater.
Storm overflows discharge reduction plan	<p>The Plan sets stringent new targets to protect people and the environment. This will require water companies to deliver the largest infrastructure programme in water company history. Water companies will have to achieve targets set out in the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by 2035, water companies will have to improve all storm overflows discharging into or near every designated bathing water; and improve 75% of overflows discharging to high priority nature sites • by 2050, this will apply to all remaining storm overflows covered by our targets, regardless of location 	The AoS should consider storm overflow discharge.
Reservoirs Act 1975	The Act places a duty on the Environment Agency in England and Wales and LAs in Scotland to maintain a register of large raised reservoirs which can contain more than 25,000m ³ of water above the natural level of any part of the land adjoining the	The AoS should consider provision to prevent escapes of water from large reservoirs or from

	reservoir. The Secretary of State appoints specialist engineers to panels set up under the Act - hence the engineers are referred to as 'Panel Engineers'.	lakes or lochs artificially created or enlarged.
Water Resources Infrastructure National Policy Statement	<p>The National Policy Statement (NPS) aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • streamline the planning permission process for nationally-significant water infrastructure projects • enable new water supply infrastructure • provide planning guidance for applicants <p>The NPS will be used as the primary basis for examination by the Examining Authority. It will be used by the Secretary of State to consider development consent applications for nationally-significant water resource infrastructure projects.</p>	The AoS should consider the need for planning permission for water infrastructure.
The Water Resources (Abstraction and Impounding) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 (England and Wales)	These regulations are for ensuring that duties are fulfilled to secure the proper and efficient use of water resources, including the regulation of water abstraction from sources of supply, including rivers, lakes, canals and underground sources through a system of licensing to protect rights to abstract water and minimise damage to the environment. They also deal with procedural matters concerning applications to the Environment Agency for licences to abstract and impound water.	The AoS should consider implications relating to the abstraction and impoundment of water.
The Water Abstraction and Impounding (Exemptions) Regulations 2017	These regulations partly implement the abstraction elements of the Water Act 2003, providing exemptions for abstraction activities that have insignificant impacts on the water environment, which would otherwise become licensable.	The AoS should consider implications relating to the abstraction of water.
NOISE		

Environmental Noise Regulations 2006	Environmental noise is regulated in England by the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). Noise is a devolved matter so regulated in Wales by the Environmental Noise (Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended), in Scotland by the Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and in Northern Ireland by the Environmental Noise (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006. The Regulations seek to manage the impact of environmental noise through strategic noise mapping and the preparation and implementation of Noise Action Plans on a 5 yearly cycle. Under these regulations, the fourth round of strategic noise mapping has been completed and updated Noise Action Plans are currently being prepared.	Ensure the impact of environmental noise is addressed through the AoS framework.
JNCC guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from geophysical surveys (seismic survey guidelines) 2017	These guidelines outline measures to minimise potential injury to marine mammals (cetaceans and seals) from geophysical surveys (e.g. seismic air-guns, sub-bottom profiling equipment).	Ensure the impact on marine mammals is addressed through the AoS framework.
JNCC Statutory nature conservation agency protocol for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from piling noise 2010	Jointly produced by JNCC, Natural England and Natural Resources Wales, these guidelines outline measures to minimise potential injury from pile driving during offshore wind farm construction and other industries that use piling (e.g. oil and gas, harbour construction).	Ensure the impact on marine mammals is addressed through the AoS framework.

Reducing marine noise Policy Paper	<p>This policy paper sets out Defra’s ongoing work and upcoming plans to minimise noise in our seas. The UK government encourages all marine industries to take all necessary steps to reduce their noise and plans to implement a series of further actions to support this including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing noise from offshore wind • Reducing noise from other sources • Consideration of UK wide noise threshold values • International Cooperation 	Ensure the impact on marine environment is addressed through the AoS framework.
TRANSPORT		
Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain 2021	<p>Sets out the vision that “clean transport is better transport”. Provides a detailed plan of commitments, actions and timings for decarbonisation of the UK transport network, which are framed around the strategic priorities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating modal shift to public and active transport; • Decarbonising road transport; • Decarbonising goods freight; • UK as a hub for green transport technology and innovation; • Place-based solutions to emissions reduction; • Reducing carbon in a global economy. 	Ensure that decarbonisation of the transport sector, with a particular emphasis on road and goods freight transport is included within the AoS framework.
ENERGY		

<p>The Energy White Paper 2020</p>	<p>The White Paper builds on the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution to outline the Government’s strategy for delivering net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifting from fossil fuels and towards new low-carbon power and renewables, for example by investing £385 million in the Advanced Nuclear Fund; • Maintaining the affordability of energy for consumers; • Increasing energy efficiency of households, buildings and the energy system as a whole; and • Creating up to 250,000 ‘green’ jobs by 2030 in a ‘Green Industrial Revolution’. 	<p>The AoS should consider including objectives that address the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as objectives that promote the transformation to an energy-efficient low carbon economy.</p>
<p>Energy Act 2023</p>	<p>The Act’s aim is for security and independence of energy supply in the United Kingdom using different methods including nuclear, oil, gas, hydro, and wind, with which the eventual outcome being decreased energy bills for the general population. The Act contains 14 parts, including different measures to achieve the goal of reduced and affordable energy prices</p>	<p>The AoS should consider the need for secure and independent energy supply.</p>
<p>The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution 2020</p>	<p>Lays the foundation for the UK’s “Green Industrial Revolution” and how this relates to reaching Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The cumulative effect of the Plan will be to reduce UK emissions by 180 Mt CO₂e between 2023 and 2032. Key components of the Plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in renewables such as offshore wind and hydrogen; • Investment in new and advanced nuclear power; • Carbon removal through investment in CCUS and wildlife protection; • Demand reduction through shifts in transport and improving the efficiency of buildings; 	<p>The AoS should consider including objectives that address the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as objectives that promote the transformation to an energy-efficient low carbon economy.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our natural environment; and • Accelerating green finance and innovation. 	
British Energy Security Strategy 2022	<p>Builds on the ‘Ten point plan for a green industrial revolution’, and the ‘Net zero strategy’.</p> <p>This plan comes in light of rising global energy prices, provoked by surging demand after the pandemic as well as Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. This will be central to weaning Britain off expensive fossil fuels, which are subject to volatile gas prices set by international markets we are unable to control, and boosting our diverse sources of homegrown energy for greater energy security in the long-term.</p> <p>With regard to nuclear, the Strategy outlines the target that by 2050 up to a quarter of electricity consumed in Great Britain will be from nuclear (up to 24 GW by 2050). Nuclear may also have a part to play in production of hydrogen.</p>	The AoS must be guided by this important overarching strategy.
Energy Innovation Programme (EIP) (2015-2021)	<p>Aimed to accelerate the commercialisation of innovative “clean” energy technologies and processes into the 2020s and 2030s. The Programme budget of £505M consisted of 6 themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £70M in smart systems • £90M in the built environment (energy efficiency and heating) • £100M in industrial decarbonisation and CCUS • £180M in nuclear innovation • £15M in renewables innovation • £50M in support for energy entrepreneurs and green financing 	The AoS must acknowledge the Government’s efforts to accelerate clean energy innovation.

	The Programme was replaced by the Net Zero Innovation Portfolio.	
Net Zero Innovation Portfolio and Advanced Nuclear Fund (2021-2025)	<p>Net Zero Innovation Portfolio is a £1B fund, announced in the 2020 Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution. It aims to accelerate commercialisation of low-carbon technologies and decrease the costs of decarbonisation. The 10 priority areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future offshore wind • Nuclear advanced modular reactors (supported through the aligned £385M Advanced Nuclear Fund) • Energy storage and flexibility • Bioenergy • Hydrogen • Homes • Direct air capture and greenhouse gas removal • Advanced CCUS • Industrial fuel switching • Disruptive technologies 	The AoS must acknowledge the Government's efforts to accelerate clean energy innovation.
Powering up Britain: The Net Zero Growth Plan 2023	<p>The Plan identifies progress and commitments made towards decarbonising the energy sector. Regarding nuclear these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmed the aim to deliver up to 24 GW nuclear capacity by 2050 • Setting up Great British Nuclear • Developing the new Nuclear NPS • Planned publication of the Low Carbon Fuels Strategy 	The AoS must acknowledge the Government's commitment to deliver clean energy capacity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued support through the £385M Advanced Nuclear Fund Establishment of revenue models such as the Nuclear Regulated Asset Base (RAB) model Committing to provide £1.7B of direct government funding to take one nuclear project to Final Investment Decision this parliament. The aim is for two projects in the next parliament (including SMRs) 	
UK Government Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: A new era of clean electricity	<p>Clean Power by 2030 is the UK Government next milestone and requires much urgent action across the UK: build the grid that Britain needs, overturning decades of delay; install clean sources of power at a pace never previously achieved; identify the energy mix needed for the 2030 power system and reorder the connection queue to achieve it; develop a flexible system that can accommodate and store Britain's renewable resources; deliver these benefits to consumers, people, households, and businesses as swiftly as possible. The high ambition means 43-50 GW of offshore wind, 27-29 GW of onshore wind, and 45-47 GW of solar power. These will be complemented by flexible capacity, including 23-27 GW of battery capacity, 4-6 GW of long-duration energy storage, and development of flexibility technologies including gas carbon capture utilisation & storage, hydrogen, and substantial opportunity for consumer-led flexibility.</p> <p>The steps in this Action Plan will reform planning and consenting processes, contract new renewable power generation at the scale required, encourage long-duration energy storage and first-of-a-kind flexible clean capacity and open the path to clean power and new opportunities for consumers to save.</p> <p>The following major actions are set out to accelerate delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity Networks and connections: reform the grid connections process and reduce the queue to connect. Around two twice as much new infrastructure will be needed in the nation's grid by 2030 as has been built in 	The AoS must recognise the Government's commitment to deliver clean power.

	<p>the past decade. Regulatory reform will ensure Clean Power 2030 is better integrated into planning and decision making, so investment can be made ahead of need and the time taken to build and deliver network projects can be reduced in line with 2030 requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and consenting signal key projects for clean power and speed up planning and consenting processes. First, upgrading the planning system itself, equipping organisations with the flexibility they need to manage the increased caseload it faces. Next ensure the system can prioritise 2030-critical projects: brought onshore wind back into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) regime; bringing forward a Planning and Infrastructure Bill with measures to streamline the delivery of critical infrastructure in the planning process; ensuring reformed planning system enhances the restoration of nature. • Renewable and nuclear project delivery: deliver renewable capacity needed by 2030. The Contracts for Difference allocation process must meet 2030 ambitions so a package of targeted measures will be implemented. Great British Energy will provide support to deliver the Local Power Plan, putting local authorities and communities at the heart of restructuring our energy economy. Committed to nuclear, including the lifetimes of existing nuclear projects where possible, and the development of emerging low carbon and renewable technologies that will play an important role beyond 2030. • Electricity market reform: A significant increase in short-duration flexibility of 29-35 GW is needed. This is the difference between the current capacity of batteries, interconnectors, and consumer-led flexibility, and capacities in 2030 under the DESNZ 'Clean Power Capacity Range'. Reforming the transmission network charging (Transmission Network Use of System (TNUoS) charges) is critical in order to enable the increased deployment of future generation. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-duration energy storage and flexibility: As we build an energy system reliant increasingly on variable renewables, improving the flexibility of the wider electricity system is key. A Low Carbon Flexibility Roadmap will be published next year, with new actions to drive clean power flexibility by 2030. We will introduce new market reforms to provide batteries and consumer-led flexibility with appropriate and fair access to, and utilisation within, relevant markets, and we will consult on how grid-scale batteries could be referenced in future planning reforms, and on including grid-scale batteries within the Environmental Permitting Regulations. • Long-duration flexibility: We are projected to need 40-50 GW dispatchable and long-duration flexible capacity in 2030 to support the system in extended periods of low renewable output. Drive the development of low carbon long-duration flexibility- Final Investment Decision for Net Zero Teesside, the world's first at scale gas power plant with carbon capture, and also developing a Hydrogen to Power business model which will de-risk investment and bring forward capacity. Scale up deployment of pump storage hydropower and foster further innovation in more nascent long-duration storage technologies such as liquid air energy storage. • Supply chains and workforce: Clean power by 2030 is a signal to investors to locate in the UK and build strong domestic supply chains for key aspects of our clean power system. Actions to support and accelerate delivery will give developers greater route-to-market certainty, but we will go further, including with the forthcoming Industrial Strategy, which will include a sector plan for clean energy industries - convene a new supply chains and workforce industry forum for key Clean Power 2030 sectors; the Clean Industry Bonus will support manufacturing in coastal and energy communities and cleaner, more sustainable supply chains; increased transparency and predictability in future Contracts for Difference allocation rounds will support investment. The National Wealth Fund will focus at least £5.8 billion of its capital on green 	
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	hydrogen, carbon capture, ports, gigafactories, and green steel, while Great British Energy will support the growth of clean power supply chains around the UK.	
Beyond 2030	<p>This report by the National Energy Systems Operator maps the way to a clean, secure and affordable energy future whilst delivering on the Climate Change Committee’s Sixth Carbon Budget and Crown Estate Scotland’s ScotWind leasing round.</p> <p>It sets out ‘National Blueprints’ and ‘Regional Blueprints’ to build grids needed for a decarbonised power system. They combine onshore, offshore, and innovative solutions to create a single modern holistic electricity network.</p>	The AoS must consider the electricity network transition to net-zero.
Future Energy Scenarios: ESO Pathways to Net Zero 2024	<p>Previous FES frameworks assessed the future of energy supply and demand through scenarios, exploring a wide range of credible outcomes for how Great Britain could meet net zero. The new framework set out in this document marks a move from reactive scenarios to strategic network planning and seeks to identify credible, strategic routes to net zero.</p> <p>It features three new net zero pathways: Holistic Transition, Electric Engagement and Hydrogen Evolution.</p>	The AoS must consider the future energy scenarios.
Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4	<p>Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 creates the opportunity for c.8GW of new offshore wind projects in the waters around England and Wales by the end of the decade.</p> <p>Round 4 further strengthens the UK’s world leading offshore wind sector, creating jobs and investment, and delivering green, reliable, affordable energy to millions more homes. It’s part of the Crown Estate’s commitment to supporting the UK’s low carbon future while ensuring healthy, biodiverse seas.</p>	The AoS must consider the potential for offshore wind.

	<p>The new projects join a strong pipeline of UK offshore windfarms already in operation, construction and planning, and will help put the UK on track to meet the government target for 40GW of offshore wind capacity by 2030.</p> <p>The Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 Agreements for Lease signing concluded in January 2023.</p>	
Offshore Wind Leasing Round 5	<p>The second phase of the Round 5 leasing process (Invitation to Tender Stage 1) is underway as of August 2024.</p> <p>Offshore Wind Leasing Round 5 seeks to establish a new floating wind sector in the Celtic Sea off the coasts of South Wales and South West England. It is expected to be the first phase of commercial development in the Celtic Sea, bringing an opportunity to create up to 4.5GW of new renewable energy capacity, while acting as a springboard for new social, economic and environmental opportunities. In its Autumn Statement in November 2023, the UK Government confirmed its intention to unlock space for a further 12GW of capacity in the Celtic Sea.</p>	The AoS must consider the potential for offshore wind.
Offshore wind extension projects 2017	<p>In February 2017, The Crown Estate launched an opportunity for existing wind farms to apply for project extensions. In August 2019, The Crown Estate announced the conclusion of the HRA, confirming that seven of the 2017 extension application projects, representing a total generating capacity of 2.85GW, would progress to the award of development rights.</p>	The AoS must consider the potential for offshore wind.

Table C-2 - Key Plans, Policies and Legislation - Regional (England, Wales, Northern Ireland & Scotland)

Policy, Plan or Programme	Key Objectives / Targets / Guidance	Implications for the AoS
England		
CROSS - THEMATIC		
Environmental Improvement Plan (25 Year Environment Plan 2018, EIP23 and all future revisions)	<p>The 25 Year Environment Plan, published in 2018, is the first Environmental Improvement Plan. The government must complete a statutory review of the EIP at least every 5 years. Its first revision (EIP23) was published in January 2023 and includes 13 legally binding environmental targets set under the EA 2021. In July 2024 the government announced a second review and revision of the EIP.</p> <p>The apex goal is improving nature and halting the decline in biodiversity.</p> <p>This is a large task but we have already started: we have created or restored wildlife habitats the size of Dorset, we are investing more than £750 million in tree-planting and peatland restoration through our Nature for Climate Fund, and we have established a network of marine protected areas across 35,000 square miles of English waters.</p> <p>We have also driven action on the global stage, reflecting that restoring nature is not just a national endeavour but also international: at UN Nature Summit COP15, we agreed a new Global Biodiversity Framework, with 23 global targets, including 30% of global land and 30% of global ocean to be protected by 2030. And our goals and targets at home will support progress towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals internationally.</p> <p>To make further progress, we will:</p>	The AoS must recognise that the apex goal is improving nature and halting decline in biodiversity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • launch the Species Survival Fund to create, enhance and restore habitats • create, restore, and extend around 70 areas for wildlife through projects including new National Nature Reserves, and the next rounds of the Landscape Recovery Projects • protect 30% of our land and sea for nature through the Nature Recovery Network and enhanced protections for our marine protected areas. We intend to designate the first Highly Protected Marine Areas this year • implement the Environment Act 2021, including rolling out Local Nature Recovery Strategies to identify areas to create and restore habitat, and Biodiversity Net Gain to enhance the built environment • support a transformation in the management of 70% of our countryside by incentivising farmers to adopt nature friendly farming practices • publish an updated Green Finance Strategy, setting out the steps we are putting in place to leverage in private finance to deliver against these goals. We have a goal to raise at least £500 million per year of private finance into nature's recovery by 2027 and more than £1 billion by 2030 <p>This goal is at the apex of our plan: all the other goals will help us to achieve it.</p>	
25 Year Environment Plan 2018	<p>The Government's 25-Year Environment Plan sets out the Government's position on environmental improvements, focussed on delivering cleaner air and water across the country, protecting at-risk wildlife, and improving natural habitats.</p> <p>The plan sets the following key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using and managing land sustainably, including embedding an "environmental net gain" principle into development. • Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes. 	<p>The AoS will need to consider implications of key actions and key targets for delivering clean air and water, protecting at-risk wildlife and</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting people to the environment to improve health and wellbeing. • Increase resource efficiency and reducing pollution. • Securing clean, healthy and productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans. • Protecting and improving the global environment. <p>The following targets are set out in the 25 Year Plan:</p> <p>Clean air:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting legally binding targets to reduce emissions of five damaging air pollutants; this should halve the effects of air pollution on health by 2030 • maintaining the continuous improvement in industrial emissions by building on existing good practice and the successful regulatory framework <p>Clean and plentiful water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clean and plentiful water by improving at least three quarters of our waters to be close to their natural state as soon as is practicable by: • reducing the damaging abstraction of water from rivers and groundwater, ensuring that by 2021 the proportion of water bodies with enough water to support environmental standards increases from 82% to 90% for surface water bodies and from 72% to 77% for groundwater bodies • reaching or exceeding objectives for rivers, lakes, coastal and ground waters that are specially protected, whether for biodiversity or drinking water as per our River Basin Management Plans <p>Thriving plants and wildlife:</p> <p>At sea: reversing the loss of marine biodiversity and, where practicable, restoring it; increasing the proportion of protected and well-managed seas, and better managing existing</p>	<p>improving natural habitats set out in the 25YP.</p>
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	<p>protected sites; making sure populations of key species are sustainable with appropriate age structures; ensuring seafloor habitats are productive and sufficiently extensive to support healthy, sustainable ecosystems</p> <p>On land and in freshwaters: restoring 75% of our one million hectares of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition, securing their wildlife value for the long term; creating or restoring 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat outside the protected site network, focusing on priority habitats as part of a wider set of land management changes providing extensive benefits; taking action to recover threatened, iconic or economically important species of animals, plants and fungi, and where possible to prevent human induced extinction or loss of known threatened species in England and the Overseas Territories; increasing woodland in England in line with our aspiration of 16.5% tree canopy cover by 2050.</p> <p>Reducing the risks of harm from environmental hazards:</p> <p>Reduce the risk of harm to people, the environment and the economy from natural hazards including flooding, drought and coastal erosion by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making sure everyone is able to access the information they need to assess any risks to their lives and livelihoods, health and prosperity posed by flooding and coastal erosion • bringing the public, private and third sectors together to work with communities and individuals to reduce the risk of harm • making sure that decisions on land use, including development, reflect the level of current and future flood risk • ensuring interruptions to water supplies are minimised during prolonged dry weather and drought • boosting the long-term resilience of our homes, businesses and infrastructure 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently: • ensure that resources from nature, such as food, fish and timber, are used more sustainably and efficiently. We will do this by: • maximising the value and benefits we get from our resources, doubling resource productivity by 2050 • improving our approach to soil management: by 2030 we want all of England's soils to be managed sustainably, and we will use natural capital thinking to develop appropriate soil metrics and management approaches • increasing timber supplies • ensuring that all fish stocks are recovered to and maintained at levels that can produce their maximum sustainable yield • ensuring that food is produced sustainably and profitably <p>Enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment:</p> <p>Conserve and enhance the beauty of our natural environment, and make sure it can be enjoyed, used by and cared for by everyone. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safeguarding and enhancing the beauty of our natural scenery and improving its environmental value while being sensitive to considerations of its heritage. • making sure that there are high quality, accessible, natural spaces close to where people live and work, particularly in urban areas, and encouraging more people to spend time in them to benefit their health and wellbeing • focusing on increasing action to improve the environment from all sectors of society <p>Mitigating and adapting to climate change:</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take all possible action to mitigate climate change, while adapting to reduce its impact. We will do this by: • continuing to cut greenhouse gas emissions including from land use, land use change, the agriculture and waste sectors and the use of fluorinated gases • making sure that all policies, programmes and investment decisions take into account the possible extent of climate change this century • implementing a sustainable and effective second National Adaptation Programme <p>Minimising waste:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise waste, reuse materials as much as we can and manage materials at the end of their life to minimise the impact on the environment. We will do this by: • 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 • significantly reducing and where possible preventing all kinds of marine plastic pollution – in particular material that came originally from land <p>The Plan introduces and references a number of external targets. Importantly it notes that 40% of the UK’s final energy consumption is the responsibility of the transport sector. The plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting legally binding targets to reduce emissions of five damaging air pollutants (intended to halve the effects of air pollution on health by 2030); • ending the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040; • continuing to cut greenhouse gas emissions including from land use, land use change, the agriculture and waste sectors and the use of fluorinated gases; and 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making sure that all policies, programmes and investment decisions take into account the possible extent of climate change this century. <p>The 25 Year Environment Plan has a specific soil health target of ‘improving our approach to soil management: by 2030 we want all of England’s soils to be managed sustainably, and we will use natural capital thinking to develop appropriate soil metrics and management approaches’. There are other actions in the Plan which will need to recognise the synergies and dependencies on soil health such as use of natural flood management solutions, SUDS, climate change mitigation and adaptation, though these do not always recognise the key role of healthy soils in the successful achievement of these aims.</p> <p>Similarly, the aim that development is in the right places, avoiding our best agricultural land and in embedding the ‘environmental net gain’ principle reflects a natural capital approach in spatial planning which aims to minimise the impact of development on finite land and soil resources.</p>	
National Planning Policy Framework 2024	<p>Sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and was revised in December 2024. The most relevant changes in the context of the Energy NPS are as follows:</p> <p>Chapter 2: Achieving Sustainable Development now acknowledges that members of the UN have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. Minor edits have been made to phrasing, setting out clearly that the environmental objective is now to protect and enhance, and to improve biodiversity, where before the requirement was simply to contribute to these matters.</p> <p>The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the 17 Global</p>	The AoS will need to consider full range of sustainability issues set out in the NPPF. This is a core document and area of consideration.

	<p>Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection.</p> <p>Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):</p> <p>a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;</p> <p>b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and</p> <p>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.</p> <p>These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.</p>	
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	<p>The NPPF is accompanied by relevant Planning Practice Guidance as follows:</p> <p>Air quality (2019): Provides guidance on how planning can take account of the impact of new development on air quality;</p> <p>Appropriate assessment (2019): Guidance on the use of Habitats Regulations Assessment</p> <p>Climate change (2019): Advises how to identify suitable mitigation and adaptation measures in the planning process to address the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Environmental Impact Assessment (2020): Explains requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.</p> <p>Flood risk and coastal change (2022): Advises how to take account of and address the risks associated with flooding and coastal change in the planning process.</p> <p>Green Belt (2019): Advice on the role of the Green Belt in the planning system</p> <p>Hazardous substances (2019): Explains planning controls relating to the storage of hazardous substances in England and how to handle development proposals around hazardous establishments.</p> <p>Healthy and safe communities (2022): Guidance on promoting healthy and safe communities.</p> <p>Historic environment (2019): Advises on enhancing and conserving the historic environment.</p> <p>Land affected by contamination (2019): Provides guiding principles on how planning can deal with land affected by contamination.</p> <p>Light pollution (2019): Advises on how to consider light within the planning system.</p>	
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	<p>Natural environment (2024): Explains key issues in implementing policy to protect and enhance the natural environment, including local requirements.</p> <p>Noise (2019): Advises on how planning can manage potential noise impacts in new development.</p> <p>Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space (2014): Gives key advice on open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and the new Local Green Space designation.</p> <p>Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas (2014): Explains the legislation governing Tree Preservation Orders and tree protection in conservation areas</p> <p>Renewable and low carbon energy (2023): Guidance to help local councils in developing policies for renewable and low carbon energy and identifies the planning considerations.</p> <p>Waste (2015): Provides further information in support of the implementation of waste planning policy.</p> <p>Water supply, wastewater and water quality (2019): Advises on how planning can ensure water quality and the delivery of adequate water and wastewater infrastructure.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change now includes the NPPF's support for the transition to net zero by 2050 and now includes overheating and water scarcity as climate impacts. Minor changes have been made to phrasing including the NPPF now outlines should help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, instead of before when it could help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and how local planning authorities should give significant weight to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements instead of supporting these improvements.</p> <p>New development should be planned for in ways that:</p>	
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	<p>a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through incorporating green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems; and</p> <p>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> <p>Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of this Framework.</p>	
Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations 2015 as amended by The Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2019	These regulations impose obligations on operators of certain activities requiring them to prevent or remediate environmental damage. They apply to damage to protected species, natural habitats, sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), water and land.	Ensure that the issue of protection and enhancement of biodiversity and designated sites is addressed through an Objective in the AoS framework.
Planning for the Future White Paper 2020	The Planning for the Future white paper sets out the Government's proposals for "once in a generation" reform of England's planning system. It proposes significant change to the current planning system in England to increase housing delivery, speed up and streamline	Noted – the NPS forms part of the

	<p>both the plan-making and decision-making processes and better promote ‘beautiful’ design are supported.</p> <p>The three pillars of the white paper are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for development; • Planning for beautiful and sustainable places; and • Planning for infrastructure and connected places. 	<p>wider planning system.</p>
<p>MMO Marine Character Areas (2018)</p>	<p>The Marine Management Organisation’s (MMO) required character assessments for the north east, north west, south east and south west marine plan areas to support decision making through the marine planning process. This follows previous character assessments completed for the south and east marine plan areas.</p> <p>The Marine Policy Statement (MPS, 2011) states that, when developing marine plans, visual, cultural, historical and archaeological impacts should be considered for all coastal areas. The MPS adds that any wider social and economic impacts of a development or activity on coastal landscapes and seascapes should also be considered, taking into account existing character and quality. The objectives of this project were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to produce a report for each of the 4 marine plan areas (NE NW SE SW), comprising the marine character area profiles • to create a single, unified GIS data layer – a national map of seascape for all marine plan areas. • to use stakeholder engagement to validate, refine and agree the seascape character assessments 	<p>The AoS will need to consider Marine Character Areas.</p>
<p>Natural England (2023). Geoconservation:</p>	<p>The publication explores the principles and practice of geoconservation, and sets out why geoconservation matters, who benefits, and how sites are selected and monitored. It</p>	<p>The AoS will need to consider</p>

Principles and Practice (NE802)	<p>focusses on the principles and practice of delivering geoconservation on the ground. It explores the threats which arise, approaches to site management, and the positive opportunities to deliver geoconservation which sometimes occur as a result of development proposals or land use change.</p> <p>A range of real case studies are used to illustrate interventions which have been successful in conserving, enhancing and promoting geoheritage sites and some which have not. Although primarily aimed at supporting geoconservation and nature recovery in England, the principles, practice and case studies set out in the publication should also be of relevance to anyone anywhere interested in or involved with conserving, recovering or enhancing geodiversity and geoheritage.</p>	potential impacts on geodiversity and geoheritage.
BIODIVERSITY		
Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services	<p>This is a new biodiversity strategy for England which builds on the Natural Environment White Paper and provides a comprehensive picture of how the government are implementing international and EU commitments.</p> <p>It sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea. It builds on the successful work that has gone before, but also seeks to deliver a real step change.</p>	Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.
The Town and Country Planning (Trees Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012	<p>The regulations are made under the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by sections 202A to 202G, 206(1)(b), 212, 213(1)(b), 316(1), 323 and 333(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.</p> <p>The Regulations require an application to be made for cutting down, topping, lopping or uprooting of any tree with a tree preservation order. This application must:</p>	The AoS will need to consider potential impacts on important trees.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be made in writing to the authority • include all of the information specified on the form • be accompanied by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a plan which identifies the tree or trees to which the application relates; • information specifying the work to be undertaken; • a statement of the applicant’s reasons for making the application; and • appropriate evidence describing any structural damage to property or in relation to tree health or safety, as applicable. 	
<p>The Environmental Targets (Biodiversity) (England) Regulations 2022</p>	<p>These Regulations set long-term targets in respect of three matters within the priority area of biodiversity under section 1 of the Environment Act 2021. Regulations 4, 7 and 14 specify targets for the purposes of the Secretary of State’s duty in section 1 of the 2021 Act to set a long-term target in respect of biodiversity. Regulation 11 specifies a target for the purposes of the Secretary of State’s duty in section 3 of the 2021 Act to set a target in respect of a matter relating to the abundance of species.</p> <p>Long-term biodiversity target: species’ extinction risk target: The long-term biodiversity target for species’ extinction risk is to reduce the risk of species’ extinction by 2042, when compared to the risk of species’ extinction in 2022.</p> <p>Measurement of species’ extinction risk target: The target is met by 31st December 2042 if the extinction risk value for 2042 calculated in accordance with paragraph (2) has a greater value than the baseline value, with the extinction risk value for 2042 and the baseline value being expressed as values in a range from 1 to 0 where—</p> <p>(a)a value of 1 would indicate that all baseline species were of Least Concern; and</p> <p>(b)a value of 0 would indicate that all baseline species were Regionally Extinct.</p>	<p>The AoS will need to consider the risk of species’ extinction 2042 target.</p>

	<p>(2) The Secretary of State must ensure that an extinction risk value for 2042 is calculated in 2042 using the same methodology that was used to calculate the baseline value(3), to indicate the aggregate risk of extinction for all baseline species at the time of its calculation.</p> <p>(3) In this regulation— “baseline species” means a species listed in the 2022 Red List Index for England; “the baseline value” means the value of 0.9070, being the value set out in the 2022 Red List Index for England to indicate the aggregate risk of extinction for all baseline species.</p> <p>(4) In this regulation— (a)a species is considered to be of Least Concern when it is classified as such for the purposes of calculating the 2022 Red List Index for England;</p> <p>(b)a species is Regionally Extinct when it is classified as such for the purposes of calculating the 2022 Red List Index for England.</p> <p>Reporting date for the species’ extinction risk target: For the purposes of section 6(1) of the 2021 Act (environmental targets: reporting duties), the reporting date for the target in regulation 4 is 1st July 2043.</p>	
<p>The Environmental Targets (Woodland and Trees Outside Woodland) (England) Regulations 2022</p>	<p>2050 Target</p> <p>This regulation specifies a long-term target in accordance with section 1(1) of the 2021 Act in respect of the percentage of land in England covered by woodland and trees outside woodland. The target is that by the end of 31st December 2050 at least 16.5% of all land in England is covered by woodland and trees outside woodland.</p> <p>Measurement</p> <p>To determine whether the target in regulation 3 is met, the area of land covered by woodland and trees outside woodland is to be calculated by the Forestry Commission.</p>	<p>The AoS will need to consider the 2050 woodland target</p>

<p>England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024</p>	<p>Building on ambitions outlined in the 25 Year Environment Plan, Government will focus on:</p> <p>Nature Recovery: The government will continue to improve the condition and increase the extent of most precious woodland habitats, such as protected sites and irreplaceable ancient woodlands.</p> <p>Levelling up through a thriving forest economy: The government will encourage demand for UK grown timber which can reduce the carbon footprint from imports and reduce emissions by replacing carbon-intensive materials and encourage innovative green finance for trees and woodlands.</p> <p>Trees and woodlands for water and soil: The right trees and woodland in the right places along and near rivers and within water catchments present opportunities for improving water quality, for flood alleviation and nature recovery. Soil is critical to supporting trees and woodland and the government will improve the understanding of appropriate soil management to sequester carbon and protect this precious resource from degradation and inappropriate tree establishment.</p> <p>Trees and woodlands for people in town and country: Trees and woodlands can cool the settlements, improve air quality and contribute to community cohesion and sense of place. The government will take steps to improve public access to trees and woodlands in a responsible way, encourage community-led tree planting and invest in partnerships with communities and local government.</p> <p>Heritage and Landscape: Trees and woodlands are important features in the landscapes. The government will encourage greater landscape scale planning which will enhance and transform landscape character, while protecting and conserving heritage assets from inappropriate tree planting and during woodland management.</p> <p>Trees outside woodlands: Trees throughout the environment such as wood pastures, ancient and veteran trees, scrub, scattered and hedgerow trees contribute to England's</p>	<p>The AoS must recognise the multi benefits trees and woodlands can provide.</p>
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	<p>natural beauty and are important spaces for nature. The government must continue to protect and enhance these features.</p> <p>Healthy, resilient trees and woodlands: The government will act now to help the trees and woodlands adapt, to enhance their resilience to stresses by reducing risks and encouraging greater diversity.</p>	
Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement 2013	<p>The Policy Statement is designed to enable the forestry sector to protect, improve and expand forestry assets so that these benefits can be maximised now and maintained for the future.</p> <p>The policy aims to ensure a forestry sector and woodland resource that keeps growing and providing benefits, despite threats such as pests and diseases and climate change, without requiring more government intervention.</p> <p>To achieve this the Policy Statement sites key objectives (in priority order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the nation's trees, woodlands and forests from increasing threats such as pests, diseases and climate change. • Improving their resilience to these threats and their contribution to economic growth, people's lives and nature. • Expanding them to further increase their value. 	It is important for the AoS to consider the protection of important trees, woods and forests.
30x30 Government Commitment 2024	<p>The Prime Minister has committed in September 2020 to protect 30% of the UK's land by 2030.</p> <p>Existing National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other protected areas already comprise approximately 26% of land in England. An additional 4% – over 400,000</p>	The AoS must consider the 30% land protection target to support the recovery of nature.

	<p>hectares, the size of the Lake District and South Downs national parks combined – will be protected to support the recovery of nature.</p> <p>The government will work with the Devolved Administrations to agree an approach across the UK, and with landowners and civil society to explore how best to increase the size and value of our protected land.</p> <p>The government has committed significant new investment to support environmental enhancement and protection in England through the Nature for Climate Fund and the new Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme.</p>	
Nature Recovery Network, Defra and Natural England 2024	<p>The Nature Recovery Network (NRN) is a major commitment in the government’s 25 Year Environment Plan. By bringing together partners, legislation and funding, we can restore and enhance the natural environment.</p> <p>The NRN will help us deal with 3 of the biggest challenges we face: biodiversity loss, climate change and wellbeing.</p> <p>Establishing the NRN will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance sites designated for nature conservation and other wildlife-rich places - newly created and restored wildlife-rich habitats, corridors and stepping stones will help wildlife populations to grow and move • improve the landscape’s resilience to climate change, providing natural solutions to reduce carbon and manage flood risk, and sustaining vital ecosystems such as improved soil, clean water and clean air • reinforce the natural and cultural diversity of our landscapes, and protect our historic natural environment 	The AoS should advocate the establishment of the NRN.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable us to enjoy and connect with nature where we live, work and play - benefiting our health and wellbeing <p>Through our work to create the NRN, by 2042 we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restore 75% of protected sites on land (including freshwaters) to favourable condition so nature can thrive • create or restore 500,000 hectares of additional wildlife-rich habitat outside of protected sites • recover threatened and iconic animal and plant species by providing more, diverse and better connected habitats • support work to increase woodland cover • achieve a range of environmental, economic and social benefits, such as carbon capture, flood management, clean water, pollination and recreation. 	
Nature for Climate Fund	<p>The Nature For Climate Peatland Grant Scheme (NCPGS), administered by Natural England, has awarded Restoration Grant funding to five successful applicants. Over the next four years they will each receive a share of £16 million from the Nature for Climate Fund, to restore peatland. This is Natural England's first round of NCPGS Restoration Grants, with more rounds planned for the next two years.</p> <p>Peatlands are Earth's largest terrestrial carbon store, holding more than twice the amount of carbon in all the world's forests. They cover 10.9% of England's land area. Unfortunately, 87% of our peatlands are degraded. In this state, they do not capture and store carbon but emit an estimated 10 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent every year.</p> <p>The NCPGS aims to capture this carbon by setting 35,000 ha of degraded peatland on a path to restoration by 2025. This will help deliver the UK's Net Zero target. It will contribute</p>	The AoS must consider the restoration of peatland to support the recovery of nature.

	to the Nature Recovery Network with wider benefits to biodiversity, water quality and natural flood management	
The Green Book, Central government guidance on appraisal and evaluation 2022	<p>The Green Book is guidance issued by HM Treasury on how to appraise policies, programmes and projects. It also provides guidance on the design and use of monitoring and evaluation before, during and after implementation.</p> <p>The key specialisms involved in public policy creation and delivery, from policy at a strategic level to analysis, commercial strategy, procurement, finance, and implementation must work together from the outset to deliver best public value. The Treasury's five case model is the means of developing proposals in a holistic way that optimises the social / public value produced by the use of public resources.</p> <p>Aspects of particular interests to the AoS:</p> <p>Greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency values - the creation of GHGs has a social cost based on its contribution to climate change. To estimate the social cost of an intervention it is necessary to include the costs of emitting GHGs. Energy efficiency has a direct social value, in addition to the value of a reduction in GHGs, as the energy saved itself has a direct benefit to society (similarly, activities that create extra demand for energy have a direct energy cost).</p> <p>Assessing and valuing effects on the natural environment - Understanding natural capital provides a framework for improved appraisal of a range of environmental effects alongside potentially harmful externalities such as air pollution, noise, waste and GHGs. Natural capital stock levels should be systematically measured and monitored for the social costs and benefits of their use to be understood and controlled (see report to the Natural Capital Committee). A focus solely on the marginal valuation of a loss in services may overlook the potential for large reductions in stocks. This could then lead to dramatic reductions in present or future services. Similarly, the cumulative effects of multiple decisions on natural capital stocks need to be considered. Where appropriate therefore, and particularly for major</p>	The AoS should advocate accounting for social cost of GHG and effects on natural environment and use of Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA to consider current and potential future climate risks and vulnerability to risks of energy projects.

	<p>impacts, assessments should consider whether affected natural assets are being used sustainably.</p> <p>Vulnerability to climate change - The Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) should be used to consider current and potential future climate risks and vulnerability to risks of an intervention. The CCRA provides a framework that quantifies interactions with climate risk. It enables a consideration of the role of climate in altering the scale and distribution of costs and benefits over the lifetime of the proposal. Supplementary guidance, Accounting for the effects of Climate Change provides steps to determine whether climate risks are relevant in relation to the appraisal of an intervention.</p>	
<p>Introduction to the Green Infrastructure Framework - Principles and Standards for England, Natural England 2023</p>	<p>Good quality Green Infrastructure (GI) has an important role to play in our urban and rural environments for improving health and wellbeing, air quality, nature recovery and resilience to and mitigation of climate change, along with addressing issues of social inequality and environmental decline.</p> <p>The Green Infrastructure Framework is a commitment in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. It supports the greening of our towns and cities and connections with the surrounding landscape. Networks of green and blue spaces and other natural features can bring big benefits for nature and climate, health and prosperity. At present access to green and blue spaces varies considerably across the country, and there are opportunities for these important assets to be better managed for the environment and to deliver a wider range of multifunctional benefits.</p> <p>The GI Framework will help local planning authorities and developers meet requirements in the National Planning Policy Framework to consider GI in local plans and in new development. It can support better planning for good quality GI, and help to target the creation or improvement of GI, particularly where existing provision is poorest.</p>	<p>AoS should promote the important role of good quality Green Infrastructure.</p>

<p>Natural England's Green Infrastructure Standards for England 2023</p>	<p>The Green Infrastructure Standards are a key component of the Green Infrastructure Framework. The Standards aim to provide clarity on the quality and quantity of green infrastructure needed to deliver climate change adaptation, net zero and well being benefits. They define what good green infrastructure “looks like”. The five headline Standards are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure Strategy Standard • Accessible Greenspace Standard • Urban Nature Recovery Standard • Urban Greening Factor Standard • Urban Tree Canopy Cover Standard <p>The Headline Green Infrastructure Standards distinguish the recommended levels of achievement for major new developments and for area wide application.</p>	<p>AoS should promote the important role of good quality Green Infrastructure.</p>
<p>Natural England's climate change risk assessment and adaptation plan 2021 (published 2022)</p> <p>Climate change adaptation reporting: third round</p>	<p>This is the third adaptation report Natural England has produced to report under the Adaptation Reporting Power (ARP) of the Climate Change Act 2008. The report outlines the following themes in developing response to the biodiversity and climate crises in an integrated way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning climate change adaptation with the aim of restoring ecological process at a landscape scale as part of nature recovery to enhance resilience and accommodate inevitable change. • working on adaptation can deliver multiple benefits, including integrating climate change mitigation, biodiversity and enhancing the quality of life for people. • recognising the benefits of local level adaptation and delivering adaptation in a place-based way. • using a natural capital and ecosystem approach to account for the multiple benefits that nature provides to society 	<p>AoS should consider risks and opportunities to biodiversity of climate change adaptation.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing adaptive management that takes account of change in the natural world both in the policy advice and delivery space. • ensuring different work programmes have a joined-up approach to adaptation. • developing the evidence base to support practical adaptation, including monitoring and evaluation of adaptation actions. • developing a joined-up approach to Nature-based Solutions which deliver mitigation and adaptation with measurable benefits for nature and people. <p>Key overarching risks and opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks to the viability of the Nature Recovery Network and the recovery of threatened species and habitats • Risks to the status of protected sites for biodiversity and geodiversity • Risks to the ability of the SSSI network, Marine Protected Area (MPAs), NNRs and protected landscapes to adapt to climate change. • Risks to natural capital and its contribution to agriculture, fisheries and sustainable development including farm advice and net gain. • Risks to the viability of natural areas for people to access and connect with nature. • Risks and Opportunities for different species and habitats under changing climatic conditions. • Opportunities for landscape scale measures to tackle climate change that enhance the natural environment. • Opportunities for nature recovery and nature-based solutions to help nature and society adapt to climate change. • Opportunities for nature-based solutions to provide additional space for people to connect with nature and cope with climate change. 	
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<p>Nature Networks Evidence Handbook (NERR081) Natural England 2020</p>	<p>The handbook aims to help the designers of nature networks by identifying the principles of network design and describing the evidence that underpins the desirable features of nature networks. It builds on the Making Space for Nature report of Lawton et al. 2010), outlining some of the practical aspects of implementing a nature network plan, as well as describing the tools that are available to help in decision making.</p> <p>To make a nature network, in contrast to an ecological network, we need to involve people from the earliest stages in planning and design, to create an overarching vision for the network, taking into account their needs and the services that a landscape provides to society.</p> <p>When developing a more detailed plan for a nature network, it is important to consider the constraints and opportunities provided by the landscape, geology and ecosystems within the landscape, and the need to build resilience to climate change.</p> <p>A suite of ecological rules of thumb to aid practitioners are provided, including a hierarchy of priority actions: (a) improve core wildlife sites; (b) increase the size of core sites; (c) increase the number of core sites; (d) improve the ‘permeability’ of the surrounding landscape for the movement of wildlife; and (e) create corridors of connecting habitat. In addition, there is a need to develop a number of Large Nature Areas (c. 5-12,000 ha) within a country that will provide centres from which wildlife will brim over into the countryside.</p>	<p>The AoS will need to consider the implementation of nature networks.</p>
<p>The Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool - Beta Test Version, Natural England 2024</p>	<p>The Environmental Benefits from Nature tool is designed to work alongside the Biodiversity metric calculation tool and provide developers, planners and other interested parties with a means of enabling wider benefits for people and nature from biodiversity net gain. The tool uses a habitat-based approach to provide a common and consistent means of considering the direct impact of land use change across 18 ecosystem service services.</p> <p>It has been developed by Natural England and the University of Oxford in partnership with Defra, the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency to support Government’s 25</p>	<p>The AoS should advocate the use of this tool.</p>

	Year Environment Plan commitment to expand net gain approaches to include wider Natural Capital benefits such as flood protection, recreation and improved water and air quality.	
The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool, Defra, 2023	The Statutory Biodiversity Metric can be used or specified by any development project, consenting body or landowner that needs to calculate biodiversity losses and gains for terrestrial and/or intertidal habitats.	The AoS should advocate the latest version of the statutory biodiversity metric.
Carbon Storage and Sequestration by Habitat, Natural England 2021	Achieving 'net zero' greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 is a statutory requirement for the UK and England. It will require major changes in the way we manage the land, coast, and sea, alongside decarbonisation of the energy, transport and other sectors. The natural environment can play a vital role in tackling the climate crisis as healthy ecosystems take up and store a significant amount of carbon in soils, sediments and vegetation. Alongside many other negative impacts, the destruction and degradation of natural habitats has resulted in the direct loss of carbon stored within them. Restoring natural systems can start to reverse this damage at the same time as supporting and enhancing biodiversity, alongside delivering co-benefits for climate change adaptation, soil health, water management and society.	The AoS should advocate the protection and restoration of natural habitats as they deliver carbon storage benefits alongside many other benefits.
Climate Change Adaptation Manual: Evidence to support nature conservation in a changing climate, RSPB, Natural England, 2020	The need for climate change adaptation has become widely recognised in the last 20 years. The environmental sector was one of the first to identify the need and to start developing approaches to adaptation. Initially much of the focus was on identifying general principles. This was an essential first step, but adaptation needs to be embedded into decision-making in specific places and circumstances. There can be a big gap between general principles and specific applications. Effective adaptation requires local knowledge and experience, combined with relevant scientific information and an understanding of practical options. It will	The AoS should embed sustainable climate change adaptation on energy infrastructure

	<p>be assisted by sharing good practice and evidence of what techniques have worked in particular places and situations.</p> <p>Utilise the concept of sustainable adaptation to look at the prerequisites for a long-term, integrated approach to adaptation, including the synergies and trade-offs associated with cross-sectoral adaptation. Four key principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation should aim to maintain or enhance the environmental, social and economic benefits provided by a system, while accepting and accommodating inevitable changes to it. • Adaptation should not solve one problem while creating or worsening others. Action that has multiple benefits and avoids creating negative effects for other people, places and sectors should be prioritised. • Adaptation should seek to increase resilience to a wide range of future risks and address all aspects of vulnerability, rather than focusing solely on specific projected climate impacts. • Approaches to adaptation should be flexible and not limit future action <p>Adaptation often needs to be developed with less knowledge and more uncertainty than is usual when making management decisions. Accepting uncertainty and adopting approaches such as adaptive management to deal with it is widely advocated.</p>	<p>decision-making processes</p>
<p>Local Nature Recovery Strategies Policy Paper June 2023</p>	<p>As part of the Government's legally binding commitments to end the historic and on-going declines of nature in England and for nature to recover, local nature recovery strategies are required. The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has appointed 48 responsible authorities to lead on preparing a local nature recovery strategy for their area. They will identify practical, achievable proposals developed with the input of people who know and understand the area. Together these 48 strategy areas cover the whole of England with no gaps or overlaps.</p>	<p>The AoS will need to consider local nature.</p>

	<p>This paper provides further information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What local nature recovery strategies will look like • How they will be prepared • Who can be involved with preparing local nature recovery strategies • How local nature recovery strategies will be delivered • When strategies will be reviewed and updated. 	
<p>The Biodiversity Gain Requirements Regulations 2024</p>	<p>These regulations prescribe categories of planning permission to which the biodiversity gain requirement that would otherwise be imposed as a general condition of planning permission do not apply. They define what amounts to “irreplaceable habitat” for the purposes of Part 2 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and modifies the application of that Schedule to planning permission in relation to such habitat. This narrow and focused list of exemptions has been deemed necessary to keep the policy ambitious but proportionate:</p> <p>Temporary exemption for small developments - To lessen the initial burden on Local Planning Authorities’ processing capacity for biodiversity gain, these Regulations will extend the transition period for small sites until April 2024.</p> <p>De minimis exemption - This exemption will ensure the biodiversity net gain planning condition is not applied to development of such a small scale that it would result in negligible or no loss of habitat value.</p> <p>Householder applications - The biodiversity net gain planning condition will not apply to householder applications because of the expected low impact on biodiversity.</p>	<p>While these regulations are not directly relevant to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and apply to developments under the Town and Country Planning Act, it is considered important to note wider requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain and ensure that Biodiversity Gain is considered within</p>

	<p>High Speed Railway Transport Network - The Exemption for the High Speed Railway Transport remains in place to cover development ancillary to the remaining phases of the high speed transport network.</p> <p>Biodiversity gain sites - This exemption removes the biodiversity net gain planning condition for projects which only enhance biodiversity for the purpose of net gain.</p> <p>Self-build and custom build applications - The biodiversity gain planning condition will not apply in relation to planning permission for small-scale self-build or custom build development, where local planning authorities are satisfied that individuals have had the primary input into the final design and layout of a house to be occupied as homes for those individuals.</p>	the AoS framework.
Making Space for Nature 2010	<p>An independent review, chaired by Professor Sir John Lawton, of England's wildlife sites and ecological network considered whether England's collection of wildlife areas represented a coherent and robust ecological network that would be capable of responding to the challenges of climate change and other pressures, was published in 2010, with recommendations to help achieve a healthy natural environment that will allow plants and animals to thrive.</p> <p>The Making Space for Nature review summarised what needed to be done in four words: more, bigger, better and joined, and set out some guiding principles and 24 recommendations.</p>	The AoS will need to consider local nature ecological networks.
Defra Policy paper: Notice of designation of sensitive catchment areas 2024	<p>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published a notice on 25 January 2024 which outlines 19 catchment areas which have been designated as "sensitive for phosphorus or nitrogen where a habitats site is wholly or partly in England is considered in an unfavourable condition by virtue of pollution from nutrients in the water from one of</p>	The AoS will need to consider sensitive catchment areas.

	<p>both of these nutrients.” The areas include SACs, SPAs, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Ramsar sites.</p> <p>In designated catchments, water companies have a duty to ensure wastewater treatment works serving a population equivalent over 2,000 meet specified nutrient removal standards by 1 April 2030 where the designation takes effect from 25 January 2024. Competent authorities (including local planning authorities) considering planning proposals for development draining via a sewer to a wastewater treatment works subject to the upgrade duty are required to consider that the nutrient pollution standard will be met by the upgrade date for the purposes of Habitats Regulations Assessments.</p>	
England Peat Action Plan 2021	<p>The England Peat Action Plan sets out the government’s long-term vision for the management, protection and restoration of our peatlands, so that they provide a wide range of benefits to wildlife, people and the planet. The 25 Year Environment Plan set out the ambition to create and deliver a new ambitious framework for peat restoration in England. The plan sets out how it will achieve this and what it will deliver which include:</p> <p>Secure our peatlands’ carbon store so they meet their contribution to Net Zero by 2050. This cannot be achieved by only restoring upland peat but will require significant changes to how we manage our lowland peat.</p> <p>Deliver Natural Flood Management and improve water quality, to increase drought resilience and the sustainability of our water supplies.</p> <p>Protect and restore our peatland habitats so they are healthy, well-functioning ecosystems rich in wildlife. These wildlife rich peatlands will form a key part of our Nature Recovery Network.</p> <p>Drive private investment in peatland restoration through natural capital markets that allow the accreditation and sale of the ecosystems services that healthy peatlands can provide</p>	The AoS must consider the protection and restoration of peatland.

	Protect the historic environment of peatlands so the important evidence of our past can be preserved for the future, and ensure that restoration projects deliver cultural heritage, education and enjoyment, alongside other public goods.	
LANDSCAPE		
National Character Areas (England), Natural England 2023	A National Character Area (NCA) is a natural subdivision of England based on a combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and economic activity. There are 159 Character Areas, each of which is distinctive with a unique 'sense of place'. These broad divisions of landscape form the basic units of cohesive countryside character, on which strategies for both ecological and landscape issues can be based. The Character Area framework is used to describe and shape objectives for the countryside, its planning and management.	The AoS needs to consider national character areas.
English National Parks and Broads UK Government Vision and Circular 2010	<p>This circular is relevant to those bodies with appropriate statutory functions and will be of interest to all those who have a key role in contributing to the success of the Parks, including landowners and land managers, private companies and voluntary bodies. In relation to the Parks, it sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vision for the English National Parks and the Broads for 2030 • The key outcomes the Government is seeking over the next five years to ensure early progress towards the vision and suggested actions for achieving those outcomes; • The key statutory duties of the National Park authorities (NPAs) and the Broads Authority (together 'the Authorities') and how they should be taken forward • Policy on governance of the Authorities • The contributions needed from others. 	The AoS should include objectives specific to the protection of landscape features and designated areas including National Parks and Broads UK.

WATER ENVIRONMENT		
National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England 2020	<p>This Strategy describes what needs to be done by all risk management authorities involved in flood and coastal erosion risk management for the benefit of people and places.</p> <p>The Strategy has three core ambitions concerning future risk and investment needs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Climate resilient places: working with partners to bolster resilience to flooding and coastal change across the nation, both now and in the face of climate change. 2. Today's growth and infrastructure resilient in tomorrow's climate: Making the right investment and planning decisions to secure sustainable growth and environmental improvements, as well as resilient infrastructure. 3. A nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change: Ensuring local people understand their risk to flooding and coastal change, and know their responsibilities and how to take action. 	Ensure that flood and coastal erosion risk is considered within the AoS framework.
The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (FCERM) 2020	<p>The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the Environment Agency to develop a National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England. This strategy describes what needs to be done by all risk management authorities (RMAs) involved in flood and coastal erosion risk management for the benefit of people and places.</p> <p>RMAs must exercise their flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) activities, including plans and strategies, consistently with the strategy. Through its 'strategic overview' role the Environment Agency exercises its strategic leadership for all sources of flooding and coastal change. This strategy seeks to better manage the risks and consequences of flooding from rivers, the sea, groundwater, reservoirs, ordinary watercourses, surface water, sewers and coastal erosion.</p>	The AoS must consider flood and coastal erosion risk management for the benefit of people and places.

	<p>The strategy provides a framework for guiding the operational activities and decision making of practitioners. The strategy sets out the long-term delivery objectives the nation should take over the next 10 to 30 years. It also includes shorter term, practical measures RMAs should take working with partners and communities.</p>	
<p>The Environmental Targets (Marine Protected Areas) Regulations 2022</p>	<p>The regulations create a legally binding target that requires at least 70% of protected features in MPAs to be in a favourable condition by 31 December 2042, with the remaining features to be in a recovering condition. This target will set, for the first time, a time-bound target for the recovery of protected features.</p>	<p>The AoS framework should consider protection and enhancement of MPAs</p>
<p>Plan for Water: our integrated plan for delivering clean and plentiful water, 2023</p>	<p>The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Plan for Water sets out the actions we will take to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transform management of the water system • clean up the water environment • create a sustainable supply of water for people, businesses and nature <p>The plan covers both the water environment, how clean it is, and water resources, how much of it we have. It brings together the significant action already taken, along with more investment, stronger regulation and tougher enforcement on those who pollute.</p>	<p>The AoS framework should consider protection and enhancement of the water environment</p>
<p>Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources – accessible</p>	<p>The national framework explores England’s long term water needs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public water supplies • agriculture • the power and industry sectors 	<p>The AoS framework should consider protection and enhancement of the water</p>

summary Policy paper, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • environmental protection <p>The national framework report marks a move to strategic regional planning. It sets out the principles, expectations and challenges for 5 regional groups (made up of the 17 English water companies and other water users). These have been developed and agreed by the regional groups, other major water abstractors, government, regulators and stakeholders. This joined up approach is needed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address the scale of challenges we face • realise opportunities from water resources planning <p>The framework contributes to two of the pledges in the government's 25 year environment plan. These are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leave the environment in a better state than we found it • improve resilience to drought and minimise interruptions to water supplies 	environment as a resource
Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP)	WRMPs are required by water companies within England and Wales, to set out how a secure supply of water will be achieved for customers and a protected and enhanced environment. The duty to prepare and maintain a WRMP is set out in sections 37A to 37D of the Water Industry Act 1991. They must be prepared every 5 years and reviewed annually.	The AoS framework should consider the protection, enhancement and resilience of the water environment.
Abstraction licensing strategies	<p>The Environment Agency controls how much water is taken with a permitting system. The Environment Agency regulate existing licences and grant new ones. To do this they use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the catchment abstraction management strategy (CAMS) process 	The AoS framework should consider the protection,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • abstraction licensing strategies <p>The publication ‘managing water abstraction’ sets out the approach and regulatory framework within which the Environment Agency will manage water resources.</p>	enhancement and resilience of the water environment.
Regional Water Resources Management Plans	<p>Following consultation on draft water resources management plans, water companies have now published statements of response and revised draft plans. These statements build on the draft plans and include changes in response to consultation feedback, and an update to the guidelines following policy and legislation changes. The revised draft plans have significant improvements and mark a key milestone before plans are finalised. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has written to companies individually about next steps for their water resources management plan, with many requiring further actions before the plans can be finalised.</p> <p>These plans are a positive step forward as, upon implementation, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve resilience to extreme droughts • ensure we are prepared for the future impacts of climate change • serve a growing population and thriving economy • mark a transition to longer term planning to protect and improve the environment <p>The 5 regional water resources groups have produced new plans that cross water company boundaries and work with other sectors to ensure optimum solutions to securing future water supplies and environmental resilience. These plans include adopting a long-term environmental destination to protect and improve water environments of the region. The regional plans are the result of notable work and collaboration across the regional group members, and mark a step change to strategic water resources planning. Water Resources East finalised its regional plan in late 2023. We are anticipating that other regions will finalise their plans during 2024.</p>	The AoS framework should consider the protection, enhancement and resilience of the water environment.

HUMAN HEALTH		
Public Health England – Strategy (2020-2025)	This strategy outlines the focus of Public Health England to help protect people and help people to live longer in good health. It notes that the most important contributors to a life in good health, including mental health, are to have a job that provides a sufficient income, a decent and safe home and a support network. Among a range of issues the strategy also sets out the need for cleaner air	AoS needs to consider the need for improving air quality, as well as the need to consider effects on vulnerable groups as well as the wider population.
Contaminated Land (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Contaminated Land (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012	Outlines the regulations on contaminated land in order to prevent new land becoming contaminated by polluting substances whilst also tackling historic contamination of sites as it poses risks to human health and the environment.	Ensure that the issue of contamination is addressed through an Objective in the AoS framework.
AIR QUALITY		
The Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2022	<p>These Regulations set an annual mean concentration target. The target is that by the end of 31st December 2040 the annual mean level of PM2.5 in ambient air must be equal to or less than 10 µg/m³ (“the target level”).</p> <p>The annual mean concentration target is met by 31st December 2040 if, at every relevant monitoring station, the annual mean level of PM2.5 in ambient air, calculated in accordance</p>	The AoS will need to consider the PM2.5 annual level target

	<p>with regulation 15 and rounded to the nearest whole number of $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, is equal to or less than the target level in the year 2040.</p> <p>Reporting date</p> <p>For the purposes of section 6(1) of the 2021 Act the reporting date for the annual mean concentration target is 15th July 2041.</p>	
SOILS		
Safeguarding our Soils: a strategy for England 2009	<p>The purpose of this strategy is to highlight the areas in which soil will be prioritised and to focus attention on tackling degradation threats. The vision of this paper is to try and ensure that by 2030, all England's soils will be managed sustainably and depredation threats tackled successfully and that this will improve the quality of England's soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations. Key topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better protection for agricultural soils • Protecting and enhancing stores of soil carbon • Building the resilience of soils to a changing climate • Preventing soil pollution • Future research and monitoring. 	Ensure that protection of soil resources is included as an objective within the AoS framework.
WASTE		
Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 as amended by The Waste (England	<p>These regulations implement the revised EU Waste Framework Directive 2008/98 which sets requirements for the collection, transport, recovery and disposal of waste. It outlines that it is a requirement for businesses to confirm that they have applied the waste</p>	Ensure that waste minimisation and resource efficiency are

and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014	<p>management hierarchy when transferring waste and include a declaration to this effect on their waste transfer note or consignment note. The regulations apply to businesses that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce waste • Import or export waste • Carry or transport waste • Keep or store waste • Treat waste • Dispose of waste • Operate as waste brokers or dealers 	included as an Objective within the AoS.
National Review of Waste Policy in England 2011	<p>This document is a review of waste policy in England and is guided by a waste hierarchy which is a guide to sustainable waste management and a legal requirement. Key objectives are the use of more sustainable approaches to the use of materials and to improve the service to householders and businesses in order to deliver environmental benefits and support economic growth. This review covers a range of topics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable use of materials and waste prevention • Regulations and enforcement • Food waste • Energy recovery • Infrastructure and planning • Next steps in waste policy. 	Ensure that waste minimisation and resource efficiency are included as an Objective within the AoS.
Waste Management Plan for England 2021	The Waste Management Plan for England is an analysis of the current waste management situation in England. The plan does not introduce new policies or change how waste is	No implications. Informative only.

	<p>managed in England. Its aim is to bring current waste management policies together under one national plan.</p> <p>The Plan does not apply to certain wastes covered by other legislation (e.g. radioactive waste).</p>	
Waste Prevention Programme for England 2023	<p>This Programme sets out the government’s view of the key roles and actions which should be taken to move towards a more resource efficient economy. As well as describing the actions the government is taking to support this move, it also highlights actions businesses, the wider public sector, the civil society and consumers can take to benefit from preventing waste.</p>	<p>Ensure that waste minimisation and resource efficiency are included as an Objective within the AoS.</p>
Resources and Waste Strategy for England, DEFRA and Environment Agency 2018	<p>This strategy sets out how material resources will be preserved by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy in England. It combines actions we will take now with firm commitments for the coming years and gives a clear longer-term policy direction in line with our 25 Year Environment Plan.</p> <p>It sets out to double resource productivity and eliminate avoidable waste of all kinds (including plastic waste) by 2050, minimise the damage caused to our natural environment by reducing and managing waste safely and carefully and deal with waste crime.</p> <p>A more circular economy (re-use, remanufacture, repair, recycle) will keep resources in use for as long as possible. It will allow us to extract maximum value from them, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of their lifespan.</p>	<p>The AoS should embed waste minimisation, resource efficiency and circular economy in energy infrastructure decision making processes</p>

National Planning Policy for Waste 2014	<p>This document sets out detailed waste planning policies. It should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework and National Policy Statements for Waste Water and Hazardous Waste.</p> <p>The policy provides guidance to local planning authorities in planning for future facilities and determining planning applications.</p>	The AoS should consider including objectives to recommend that waste generated following new energy development is dealt with in a sustainable manner, consistent with the waste hierarchy.
The Environmental Targets (Residual Waste) (England) Regulations 2022	The Regulations specify the standard to be achieved in respect of the target and the date by which it must be achieved. Regulation 2 makes provision in respect of a long-term target to ensure that the total mass of residual waste per head of population in England does not exceed 287 kilograms by 31st December 2042.	The AoS must consider residual waste per head of population target
NOISE		
Noise Policy Statement for England 2010	<p>The objectives of the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) sets out three noise levels to be defined by the noise assessor: These are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOEL – No Observed Effect Level. This is the level below which no effect can be detected. Below this level there is no detectable effect on health and quality of life due to noise. 	Ensure that the health and well-being of people is addressed through an objective in the AoS framework and that noise

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOAEL – Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level. This is the level above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected. • SOAEL – Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level – This is the level above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life can occur. <p>The NPSE considers that the noise levels above the SOAEL would be seen to have, by definition, significant adverse effects and would be considered unacceptable. Where the assessed noise levels fall between the LOAEL and the SOAEL noise levels the policy statement requires that:</p> <p>“all reasonable steps should be taken to mitigate and minimise adverse effects on health and quality of life while also taking into account the guiding principles of sustainable development. This does not mean that such adverse effects cannot occur but that efforts should be focused on minimising such effects”</p> <p>Where noise levels are below the LOAEL it is considered there will be no adverse effect. Once the noise levels are below the NOEL there will be no observable change.</p>	issues are considered.
Environmental Noise (England) Regulations (2006) (as amended)	<p>The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) covers noise from roads, rail, aviation and industry. The regulations seek to manage the impact of environmental noise through the preparation and adoption of strategic noise mapping in relation to agglomerations, major roads, major railways and major airports, every 5 years and the preparation and implementation of Noise Action Plans to manage noise issues in relation to those areas and noise sources.</p> <p>The Noise Action Plans identify Important Areas (areas exposed to the highest levels of noise). The relevant authorities are responsible for the investigation of these areas and, where appropriate, decisions around what noise mitigation is appropriate</p>	Ensure that AoS ensures environmental noise is addressed.

Wales		
CROSS-THEMATIC		
Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (Wales) Regulations 2009, updated with Amendment Regulations 2015	These regulations impose obligations on operators of certain activities requiring them to prevent or remediate environmental damage. They apply to damage to protected species, natural habitats, sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), water and land.	Ensure that the issue of protection and enhancement of biodiversity and designated sites is addressed through the AoS framework.
Future Wales – The National Plan 2040	<p>The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 (the 2015 Act) requires the Welsh Government to develop a National Development Framework (NDF). Wales’s first NDF, Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (Future Wales), was published in February 2021.</p> <p>Future Wales sets out the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.</p> <p>Future Wales sets out a 20 year land use framework and must be reviewed at least every five years. It is a material consideration in planning decisions and all Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs) must be in conformity with it.</p> <p>The purpose of Future Wales is to:</p>	The AoS should consider objectives which promote resilience to the impacts of climate change.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system can deliver it; • provide direction for SDPs and LDPs; • support the determination of applications under the Developments of National Significance (DNS) regime; • sit alongside PPW, which provides the context for land use planning; and • support national economic, transport, environmental, housing, energy and cultural strategies and ensure they can be delivered through the planning system. The Plan recognises the role that nuclear (GW-scale, SMRs and AMRs) could play in providing low carbon energy and bringing economic benefits to the North-West of Wales. 	
Environment (Wales) Act 2016	<p>Legislation introduced by the National Assembly for Wales enabling the planning and management of the natural resources of Wales in a more sustainable, pro-active and joined-up way than was previously possible. The Act has seven main parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable management of natural resources • Climate change • Charges for carrier bags • Collection and disposal of waste • Fisheries for shellfish • Marine licensing • Flood and coastal erosion committee 	The AoS should give particular regard to sustainable management of natural resources, climate change, fisheries and marine licencing and flood and coastal erosion.
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	<p>The act explains what is meant by ‘sustainable development’ and requires public bodies to carry out sustainable development. It requires bodies to set well-being objectives that are to contribute to the achievement of well-being goals and to take steps to meet those objectives,</p>	The AoS should include objectives that measure

	<p>and further requires indicators that measure progress towards achieving the well-being goals.</p> <p>In addition, Well Being Plans, prepared by Public Service Boards under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act assess the state of well being in that area and set local objectives accordingly.</p>	<p>sustainability, and be considerate of well-being objectives/goals.</p>
<p>State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) for Wales 2020</p>	<p>This is Wales’ second assessment of sustainable management of natural resources, including Wales’ impact globally. It assesses the extent to which natural resources in Wales are being sustainably managed, and recommends a proactive approach to building resilience. The report links the resilience of Welsh natural resources to the well-being of the people of Wales.</p>	<p>The AoS should include objectives reflective of natural resource uptake, sustainable management and reliance.</p>
<p>Natural Resources Policy (Welsh Government) 2017</p>	<p>The focus of the Natural Resources Policy is the sustainable management of Wales’ natural resources, to maximise their contribution to achieving goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The policy sets out three National Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering nature-based solutions, • Increasing renewable energy and resource efficiency, • Taking a place-based approach <p>The Policy sets the context for Area Statements, ensuring that the national priorities for delivering sustainable management of natural resources inform the approach to local delivery.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider the uptake of natural resources during construction and ensure resource efficiency is integrated in development design through objectives specific to sustainable and</p>

	Key policy areas were identified as being important to deliver Natural Resources Policy. One such policy area is energy, including nuclear energy – which can drive sustainable growth.	efficient resource use.
Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024)	<p>Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs, stated below).</p> <p>There are a number of goals and objectives in relation to the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Places: Achieving Well-being Through Placemaking • Strategic and Spatial Choices • Active and Social Places • Productive and Enterprising Places • Distinctive and Natural Places <p>The document offers advice and guidance, for example, how local planning authorities should plan, manage and write Local Development Plans.</p> <p>PPW and Future Wales are supported by a range of other policy and guidance documents, including Technical Advice Notes (TANs) which contain detailed guidance in specific areas.</p> <p>Technical Advice Notes (TANs):</p> <p>TAN 2: Planning and Affordable Housing (2006)</p> <p>TAN 3: Simplified Planning Zones (1996)</p> <p>TAN 4: Retail and Commercial Development (2016)</p> <p>TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)</p>	The AoS objectives should address environmental protection including protecting biodiversity, conserving landscapes, preserving the historic environment, protecting water resources and the coastal environment, protecting land quality and air quality. It should also include objectives which support economic development, adapting to climate change and reducing

	<p>TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)</p> <p>TAN 7: Outdoor Advertisement Control (1996)</p> <p>TAN 10: Tree Preservation Orders (1997)</p> <p>TAN 11: Noise (1997)</p> <p>TAN 12: Design (2016)</p> <p>TAN 13: Tourism (1997)</p> <p>TAN 14: Coastal Planning (March 1998)</p> <p>TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004)</p> <p>TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (2009)</p> <p>TAN 18: Transport (2007)</p> <p>TAN 19: Telecommunications (2002)</p> <p>TAN 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (2017)</p> <p>TAN 21: Waste (2017)</p> <p>TAN 23: Economic Development (2014)</p> <p>TAN 24: The Historic Environment (2017)</p>	<p>greenhouse gas emissions.</p>
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<p>One Wales: One Planet – the Sustainable Development Scheme for Wales (2009)</p>	<p>The document sets out the steps and actions necessary to achieve sustainable development in Wales, for example, an indicative route map of the journey Wales will need to take to use only its fair share of the earth’s resources.</p> <p>The vision for a Sustainable Wales is as follows:</p> <p>Lives within its environmental limits, using only its fair share of the earth’s resources so that our ecological footprint is reduced to the global average availability of resources, and we are resilient to the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Healthy, biologically diverse and productive ecosystems that are managed sustainably.</p> <p>A resilient and sustainable economy that is able to develop whilst stabilising, then reducing, its use of natural resources and reducing its contribution to climate change.</p> <p>Communities which are safe, sustainable and attractive places for people to live and work, where people have access to services, and enjoy good health.</p> <p>A fair, just and bilingual nation in which citizens of all ages and backgrounds are empowered to determine their own lives, shape their communities and achieve their full potential.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider objectives which support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions alongside other economic, social and environmental effects of new energy development.</p>
<p>Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme (2014-2020)</p>	<p>This Rural Development Programme is a 7-year investment programme supporting a wide range of activities to achieve its three main objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering the competitiveness of agriculture. • Ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources, and climate action. • Achieving a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities including the creation and maintenance of employment. 	<p>The AoS framework should consider including objectives which encourage sustainable management of agriculture and the environment.</p>

	<p>All projects funded by the Programme must align with one or more of the six European Rural Development Priorities.</p> <p>Note the RDP was extended to 2023.</p>	
TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning 2009	<p>This Technical Advice Note provides advice about how the land use planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation.</p> <p>Some key principles which the town and country planning system in Wales should seek to achieve include:</p> <p>Development which provides a net benefit for biodiversity conservation with no significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally.</p> <p>Helping to ensure that development does not damage, or restrict access to, or the study of, geological sites and features or impede the evolution of natural processes and systems especially on rivers and the coast.</p> <p>Planning to accommodate and reduce the effects of climate change by encouraging development that will reduce damaging emissions and energy consumption and that help habitats and species to respond to climate change.</p> <p>Local authorities have an important role in delivering biodiversity objectives at a local level. Local Biodiversity Action Plans and Local Agenda 21 Plans can inform development plan preparation and development plan policies may help to maintain or enhance biodiversity.</p>	The AoS should contain objectives relating to the protection of biodiversity and geological resources.
TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities 2010	<p>This Technical Advice Note provides guidance on how the planning system can contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable rural economies. 	The AoS should consider objectives relating to the protection and sustainable

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable rural housing. • Sustainable rural services. • Sustainable agriculture. <p>It advises planning authorities to produce development plans which set out the spatial vision for rural communities. This should be based on a sound understanding of the functional linkages within the area and the potential for improving the sustainability of the existing settlement pattern.</p> <p>Development plans should also clearly define local need by taking into account the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area.</p>	development of rural areas.
TAN 11: Noise 1997	<p>This note provides advice on how the planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development or adding unduly to the costs and administrative burdens of business. It outlines some of the main considerations which local planning authorities should take into account when drawing-up development plans, policies and when determining planning applications for development which will either generate noise or be exposed to existing noise sources.</p>	<p>The AoS framework should consider an objective that will enable the assessment of such effects on human health.</p> <p>Noise and vibration should also be considered when assessing effects on other environmental receptors.</p>

<p>TAN 13: Tourism 1997</p>	<p>The Wales Tourist Board has responsibility for promoting and developing tourism in Wales. It has a duty to advise the</p> <p>Government and other public bodies, including local authorities, on matters affecting tourism. While ‘tourism’ cannot be regarded as a single or distinct category of land use, the issues it raises should be addressed in preparing or revising development plans and may feature in development control decisions. Development plans may provide guidance on opportunities for larger scale or innovative projects, appropriate facilities for the countryside or designated areas and the provision of facilities in historic towns and seaside resorts.</p>	<p>The AoS framework should consider a number of objectives addressing environmental protection which indirectly positively impact on tourism.</p>
<p>TAN 15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion 2021</p>	<p>This TAN provides technical guidance that supplements Planning Policy Wales (PPW) in relation to flooding and coastal erosion. It provides a framework within which the flood risks arising from rivers, the sea and surface water, and the risk of coastal erosion can be assessed. It also provides advice on the consequences of the risks and adapting to and living with flood risk.</p>	<p>The AoS needs to include objectives relating to flood risk and the need to manage runoff effectively.</p> <p>As the siting of energy infrastructure in a flood risk area could generate significant adverse consequences, appropriate criteria in relation to flood risk need</p>

		to be considered as part of the process of developing the new NPS.
TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (2009)	<p>This Technical Advice Note advises on the role of the planning system in making provision for sport and recreational facilities and informal open spaces, as well as protecting existing facilities and open spaces in urban and rural areas in Wales.</p> <p>Topics discussed include preparation of Open Space Assessments, keeping of existing facilities, provision of new facilities and planning for allotments and spaces for children's and young people's play. It also considers how planning agreements can help to ensure the provision and maintenance of facilities.</p>	The AoS should consider objectives which seek to protect areas of open space and areas used for sport and recreation.
TAN 18: Transport 2007	<p>At the heart of this TAN is the need for an efficient and safe transport system. It acknowledges the significant impact that transport can have upon human health and the environment.</p> <p>Planning Policy Wales and the Wales Transport Strategy aim to secure the provision of transport infrastructure that improves access, builds a stronger economy, improves road safety and fosters more sustainable communities.</p>	The AoS should consider objectives that do not adversely affect the efficiency of the transport system and seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation sources.

		<p>The preparation of the new NPS should consider the principles of sustainable transport. There will be a need for safe, efficient transport connections to enable the delivery of raw materials and the siting of new energy infrastructure should not adversely affect the strategic transport infrastructure.</p>
TAN 21: Waste 2014	<p>This Technical Advice Note, in conjunction with Planning Policy Wales, sets a framework for facilitating the delivery of sustainable waste management infrastructure throughout the planning process.</p> <p>The TAN encourages local planning authorities to create a partnership approach with Natural Resources Wales, others in local and central government, the waste management industry, the voluntary sector and the general public is encouraged. This is because the developing legal environmental and technological circumstances influencing waste resource</p>	<p>The development and operation of the facilities would generate waste throughout the project lifecycle.</p>

	management will require changes of priorities and solutions that the land use planning system is unable to deliver on its own.	The AoS should consider the management of wastes associated with the development, operation and decommissioning of new energy infrastructure.
CLIMATE CHANGE		
Working together to reach net zero: all Wales plan 2021-2025	The first All Wales Plan published alongside Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 (2021-25). It demonstrates the commitment from Welsh Government's partners in working together to reach Net Zero.	<p>The AoS should consider objectives which support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions where possible.</p> <p>The AoS should consider objectives which improve the resilience of energy infrastructure to</p>

		changing climatic conditions throughout the project's lifecycle.
Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 (2021 – 2025)	<p>This Plan sets out how Wales aims to meet the second carbon budget (2021-2025) and associated target. The Plan sets out 123 policies and proposals, alongside commitments and actions across Wales.</p> <p>The sector pathway chapters in the Plan are: electricity and heat generation, transport, residential buildings, industry and business, agriculture, land use, waste management and public sector.</p> <p>The Plan includes the vision for a decarbonised energy system which provides wider economic and social benefits for Wales than the system currently in place.</p>	The AoS should consider including objectives that address the reduction of carbon emissions and decarbonisation of the energy system
Policy Statement on Local ownership of energy generation in Wales – benefitting Wales today and for future generations	The intent of this policy is to retain social and economic benefit from future energy developments located in Wales. It expects all new energy projects in Wales to include at least an element of local ownership, in order to retain wealth within Wales and provide real benefit to communities across Wales. It defines 'community ownership' of a renewable energy project as a renewable energy or renewable storage development located in Wales, which is wholly owned by a social enterprise whose assets and profits are committed to the delivery of social and/or environmental objectives. It sets out that the Welsh Government supports renewable and low carbon energy projects developed by communities, or benefit the host community or Wales as a whole.	The AoS must consider the implications of this local ownership policy statement in the context of NSIPs.
Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales 2024	This strategy sets out what we are doing already, and what we will do in the future, to respond to the changing climate. This strategy represents a new approach to considering	Ensure Climate Change adaptation is

	<p>the interrelated actions needed for addressing climate adaptation and resilience in Wales. In developing the strategy, the following principles were applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A focus on delivery of climate adaptation outcomes • A systems-based approach, addressing interdependencies between different sectors and stakeholders • A wider perspective of collective action across Wales, recognising the needs and roles of different stakeholders in delivering climate adaptation • Integration with other societal goals, such as decarbonisation, social justice and nature recovery 	considered as an objective within the AoS
Adapting to Climate Change: Guidance for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Authorities in Wales 2022	This guidance aims to inform the design and resilience of flood and coastal risk management schemes, which should consider credible and reasonable climate change impacts.	Ensure climate change adaptation is considered as an objective within the AoS
The Climate Change (Wales) Regulations 2021: integrated impact assessment	Consideration of the impact on well-being of more ambitious climate targets. The Welsh Government is proposing to increase Wales's climate targets in response to the latest climate science and the recommendations of the Climate Change Committee. The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) estimates the costs and benefits of the CCC's recommended Balanced Pathway to net zero in 2050. However, the actual impact of meeting our targets on our well-being goals and objectives depends on the measures and policies chosen. These policies will be set out in a report for each carbon budget period, the next being published in November 2021. Policies to deliver our carbon budgets are subject to an engagement process and their own impact assessments.	The AoS should consider objectives which support the Climate Change Regulations.

	<p>The Climate Change (Wales) Regulations 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (Amendment of 2050 Emissions Target) Regulations 2021 • The Climate Change (Interim Emissions Targets) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 • The Climate Change (Carbon Budgets) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 • The Climate Change (Net Welsh Emissions Account Credit Limit) (Wales) Regulations 2021 	
WASTE		
The Waste (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Wales) Regulations 2012	<p>The regulations are designated for the purposes of section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972 in relation to the prevention, reduction and management of waste.</p> <p>They amend the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 by replacing regulation 13. They state that from 1 January 2015, waste collection authorities must collect waste paper, metal, plastic and glass separately. They also impose a duty on waste collection authorities, from that date, when making arrangements for the collection of such waste, to ensure that those arrangements are by way of separate collection. The duties apply to waste classified as waste from households and waste that is classified as commercial or industrial waste.</p>	The AoS should consider including objectives that promote the reduction of waste sent for disposal and encourage re-use, recycling and recovery of waste.
Waste Separation Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2023	<p>These Regulations set out waste separation requirements in Wales (for the purposes of section 45AA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (c. 43) (the “1990 Act”)) with the aim of ensuring that waste is managed in a manner that promotes high quality recycling. The separation requirements apply in respect of all premises other than domestic properties and</p>	The AoS should consider including objectives that promote the reduction of waste

	<p>caravans. However, hospitals are not required to present waste separately for collection until 6 April 2026.</p> <p>Separation requirements are specified in relation to the presentation of waste for collection (regulation 3), the collection of waste (regulation 4) and the handling of waste that has been collected (regulation 5).</p>	<p>sent for disposal and encourage re-use, recycling and recovery of waste.</p>
Beyond Recycling 2021	<p>‘Beyond Recycling’ is the Welsh Governments updated waste strategy, published in 2021. The strategy’s six core themes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving innovation in materials use • Upscaling prevention and re-use • Building on our recycling record • Investing in infrastructure • Enabling community and business action • Aligning Government levers 	<p>The AoS should consider including objectives that promote the reduction of waste sent for disposal and encourage re-use, recycling and recovery of waste.</p>
BIODIVERSITY		
The Town and Country Planning (Trees) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2017	<p>The regulations are made under the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by sections 198(8) and 333(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. They aim to ensure the protection of trees.</p> <p>The Regulations require an application to be made for cutting down, topping, lopping or uprooting of any tree with a tree preservation order. This application must:</p>	<p>The AoS will need to consider potential impacts on important trees.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be made in writing to the authority • include all of the information specified on the form be accompanied by: • a plan which identifies the tree or trees to which the application relates; • information specifying the work to be undertaken; • a statement of the applicant's reasons for making the application; and • appropriate evidence describing any structural damage to property or in relation to tree health or safety, as applicable. 	
The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 as amended by The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2017	<p>The central aim of the Regulation is to protect the environment, including species and habitats, from developments. They consolidate with modification the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.</p> <p>This Order provides for procedures connected with planning applications, consultations in relation to planning applications, the determination of planning applications, appeals, local development orders, certificates of lawful use or development, the maintenance of registers of planning applications and related matters.</p>	The AoS must consider objectives which seek to protect the environment from the harmful impacts of development.
Woodlands for Wales 2018	<p>This document details Welsh Government's fifty-year strategy for woodlands and trees in Wales. It recognises Wales's trees as an important asset in delivering the Government's key priorities of driving green growth, resilience and safety and tackling poverty.</p> <p>The vision of the strategy is as follows:</p>	The AoS framework should include objectives which address the protection of woodland.

	<p>“Wales will be known for its high-quality woodlands that enhance the landscape, are appropriate to local conditions and have a diverse mixture of species and habitats”.</p> <p>It is envisaged that real local and national social and community benefits, thriving woodland-based industries and a better-quality environment throughout Wales can be achieved through delivery of the strategy.</p>	
CONTAMINATED LAND		
The Contaminated Land (Wales) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Contaminated Land (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012	These regulations make provision, in relation to Wales, for the identification and remediation of contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It sets out the regime to deal with contaminated land and provides a system to identify and remediate sites where contamination is causing unacceptable risk to human health and/or the wider environment.	The AoS framework should address the potential of land contamination and appropriate consideration should be given to potential impacts and how they can be addressed.
HERITAGE		
Historic Environment Act (Wales) 2023	The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 and its associated measures are intended to provide a robust structure for protecting and managing the historic environment. Of note, Part 2 makes provision about conservation monuments of special historic interest, Part 3 makes provision for conservation of buildings of architectural or historic interest, Part 4	Ensure historic environment objective within AoS framework.

	relates to conservation areas, while Part 6 provides for a register of historic parks and gardens, place names and historic environment records.	
Historic Environment and Climate Change in Wales – Sector Adaptation Plan 2020	<p>This adaptation plan sets out raise awareness of the risks and opportunities of climate change for the historic environment of Wales and the need for adaptation. Our objective is to encourage collaboration and action across all sectors that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase our knowledge and understanding of the threats and opportunities for the historic environment from changing weather and climate in the short, medium and long term • increase our capacity by developing the awareness, skills and tools to manage the impacts of climate change on the historic environment • build the resilience of the historic environment by taking action to adapt and respond to the risks, reduce vulnerability and maximise the benefits. 	Ensure historic environment is considered and note challenges posed by a changing climate.
Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment 2017	<p>This TAN is to provide guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and Listed Building (LBC) applications. This TAN provides specific guidance on how the following aspects of the historic environment should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Heritage Sites • Scheduled monuments • Archaeological remains • Listed buildings • Conservation areas 	Ensure historic environment objective within AoS framework.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic parks and gardens • Historic landscapes • Historic assets of special local interest 	
Welsh Government 2018 Ministers Priorities for the Historic Environment	<p>The Priorities for the Historic Environment of Wales by Lord Elis-Thomas AM, Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport include ambitions under the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring for our historic environment • Making skills matter • Cherishing and enjoying our historic environment • Making our historic environment work for our economic well-being • Delivering through partnership 	The AoS should consider including objectives which aim to protect heritage assets and the historic environment.
WATER ENVIRONMENT		
Water Strategy for Wales 2015	<p>The strategy sets out the strategic direction for water policy in Wales over the next 20 years and beyond.</p> <p>The vision for the strategy is to “ensure that Wales continues to have thriving water environment which is sustainably managed to support healthy communities, flourishing businesses and the environment. We want the people of Wales to receive first class, value for money water services with water used efficiently, safely and respectfully by all”.</p>	The AoS should consider objectives which contribute to the sustainable use of water resources.
Flood and Water Management Act 2010	An Act to make provision about water, including provision about the management of risks in connection with flooding and coastal erosion.	The AoS should consider objectives

		concerning the the management of risks in connection with flooding and coastal erosion.
National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales 2020	<p>This Strategy sets out Welsh policies on flood and coastal erosion risk management. It establishes a delivery framework that meets the needs of Wales, and sets out four overarching objectives for managing flood and coastal erosion risk in Wales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the consequences for individuals, communities, businesses and the environment from flooding and coastal erosion • Raising awareness of and engaging people on flood and coastal erosion risk • Providing an effective and sustained response to flood and coastal erosion events • Prioritising investment in the most at risk communities. 	The AoS should include objectives specific to coastal erosion risk management. Development near the coast has the potential to lead to coastal erosion through changing-coastal processes.
Welsh National Marine Plan (Welsh Government 2019)	<p>The Welsh National Marine Plan is the first marine plan for Wales and represents the start of a process of shaping seas to support economic, social, cultural and environmental objectives. Marine planning will guide the sustainable development of our marine area by setting out how proposals will be considered by decision makers.</p> <p>It sets out the vision for the Welsh inshore and offshore marine plan regions as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh seas are clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse; • Through an ecosystem approach, natural resources are sustainably managed and our seas are healthy and resilient, supporting a sustainable and thriving economy; 	The AoS should establish objectives which align with the aims of the Plan and protect the marine and coastal environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through access to, understanding of and enjoyment of the marine environment and maritime cultural heritage, health and well-being are improving; • Through Blue Growth more jobs and wealth are being created and are helping coastal communities become more resilient, prosperous and equitable with a vibrant culture; and • Through the responsible deployment of low carbon technologies, the Welsh marine area is making a strong contribution to energy security and climate change emissions targets. 	
Flood Consequence Assessments: climate Change Allowances 2021	When considering new development proposals, Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk (TAN15, now superseded) states that it is necessary to take account of the potential impact of climate change over the lifetime of development. The Flood Consequence Assessment guidance document sets out the climate change allowances that should be used in flood consequence assessments submitted in support of relevant planning applications, and to inform development plan allocations.	The AoS must take into account this guidance document.
Shoreline Management Plans applicable in Wales	<p>A Shoreline Management Plan policy describes how a stretch of shoreline is most likely to be managed to address flood and/or erosion – although this is subject to conditions. Stretches of coast are divided into ‘management units’, and for each of these one of four different management policies are agreed, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No active intervention – there is no planned investment in defending against flooding or erosion, whether or not an artificial defence has existed previously • Hold the (existing defence) line – an aspiration to build or maintain artificial defences so that the position of the shoreline remains. • Sometimes, the type or method of defence may change to achieve this result 	The AoS should establish objectives which align with the aims of the Plan and protect the shoreline environment and prevent flooding and/or erosion.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managed realignment – allowing the shoreline to move naturally, but managing the process to direct it in certain areas. This is usually done in low-lying areas, but may occasionally apply to cliffs. 	
Capacity of the network (drainage and wastewater management plan): action plan	To understand the scale of improvement needed the capacity of the drainage and sewerage networks over the long term must be assessed. To do this a Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) has been developed and will be consulted on by water companies with customers, stakeholders, regulators, and local authorities.	The AoS should consider the capacity of the drainage and wastewater network.
The Welsh Government Guiding Principles for Developing Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs) 2022	These guiding principles are addressed to and apply to water undertakers whose area is wholly or mainly in Wales. The document explains the key policy priorities the government expects WRMP's to address.	The AoS should consider the water resources.
Introduction of Strategic Resource Areas for Tidal Stream Energy (January 2025)	<p>In 2019, we introduced Wales's first marine plan, setting out our vision for the sustainable development of our seas and establishing a new planning system. Today, I would like to update the Senedd on a significant step forward in the implementation of the plan, the introduction of the first marine planning Strategic Resource Areas (SRAs).</p> <p>SRAs are a new and innovative marine planning tool which will indicate which sectors may have priority over others in specific areas. We must plan carefully for the future of our seas, understanding the opportunities for generating sustainable and green energy while also protecting and enhancing our unique, irreplaceable marine environment. SRAs are an important part of doing this. They will help us understand where there are opportunities to take forward sustainable development and how these relate to the most environmentally</p>	The AoS must take into account the SRAs.

	sensitive areas which we must protect. They will also help ensure that the decisions we take today have the interests of the future at their heart.	
Welsh National Marine Plan Implementation Guidance (June 2020)	This supplementary Implementation Guidance supports the Welsh National Marine Plan and is a consideration for Public Authorities in taking decisions which may affect the plan area. It provides further detail on WNMP policies to help ensure they are implemented effectively and consistently; it does not introduce new planning policy. This IG sits alongside other non-statutory plan related policy, guidance and evidence to support marine planning for Wales and will be updated periodically.	The AoS should establish objectives which align with the aims of the Welsh National Marine Plan and protect the marine and coastal environment.
The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021	<p>These Regulations make provision concerning the protection of waters against pollution by nitrates from agricultural sources.</p> <p>The Welsh Government announced regulatory measures to address agricultural pollution on 27 January 2021. The regulations apply to all farms across Wales and came into force on 1 April 2021.</p>	The AoS should establish objectives which protect waters against pollution by nitrates from agricultural sources.
LANDSCAPE		
Valued and Resilient: The Welsh Government's Priorities for Areas of	Designated Landscapes: Valued and Resilient outlines key priority areas following consideration of the outcomes from the Review of Designated Landscapes, Future Landscapes Wales Programme and responses to the Taking forward Wales' sustainable management of natural resources consultation. It provides clarity of purpose for the National	Ensure that the need to improve resilience of National Parks

<p>Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks (July 2018)</p>	<p>Parks and AONBs in the context of the UK's exit from the European Union and at the close of a period of review.</p> <p>It calls on the designated landscapes managing bodies to deliver on a number of Welsh Government priorities, including the Nature Recovery Plan, a refreshed woodland strategy, the decarbonisation agenda, and Cymraeg 2050. Its 10 cross-cutting themes aim to improve resilience and realise the full value of Wales' landscapes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscapes for everyone • Exemplars of the sustainable management of natural resources • Halting the loss of biodiversity • Green energy and decarbonisation • Realising the economic potential of landscape • Growing tourism and outdoor recreation • Thriving Welsh language • All landscapes matter • Delivering through collaboration • Innovation in resourcing 	<p>and AONBs designated landscapes is considered in the AoS.</p>
<p>Welsh Government's Biodiversity Deep Dive: Recommendations</p>	<p>The objective of the Welsh Government's Biodiversity Deep Dive was to develop a set of collective actions we can take immediately to support meaningful delivery of the CBD '30 by 30' goal, recognising the capabilities we have in Wales and reflecting our duties and approach under the Wellbeing of Future Generations and Environment (Wales) Acts. The recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform the protected sites series so that it is better, bigger, and more effectively connected 	<p>The AoS should establish objectives which align with the recommendations.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a framework to recognise Nature Recovery Exemplar Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) that deliver biodiversity outcomes • Unlock the potential of designated landscapes (National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to deliver more for nature and 30 by 30 • Continue to reform land and marine management and planning (including spatial) to deliver more for both protected sites and wider land / seascapes • Build a strong foundation for future delivery through capacity building, behaviour change, awareness raising and skills development • Unlock public and private finance to deliver for nature at far greater scale and pace • Develop and adapt monitoring and evidence frameworks to measure progress towards the 30x30 target and guide prioritisation of action • Embed Nature Recovery in policy and strategy in public bodies in Wales 	
ENERGY		
Natural Resources Wales Technical Guidance	<p>NRW has produced technical guidance which is relevant to the energy technologies covered by the AoS. These provide information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine aggregate extraction • Offshore wind developments • Marine renewable energy developments • Using adaptive management for marine developments • Scoping an Environmental Impact Assessment for marine developments 	The AoS should consider guidance provided by NRW Technical Notes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine ecology datasets for marine developments - guidance for developers on the datasets NRW holds that is useful in scoping assessments. • Marine vertebrate conservation legislation in Wales • Benthic habitat assessments for marine developments • Marine physical processes and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) <p>NRW has further relevant guidance under development which will be added to their website as soon as it is available.</p>	
Decarbonisation of industry and business (2024)	<p>This research report contributes to setting foundations for future developments in decarbonisation of Industry and Business in Wales. As per Carbon Budget 2, Welsh Governments work on decarbonisation is split into eight sectors. Among these sectors, Industry and Business is responsible for 38.1 per cent of total Welsh emissions in 2019.</p> <p>A series of key recommendations for potential expansion of the NAEI and additional data sets that can be used to aid the analysis already being undertaken by Welsh Government are included.</p>	The AoS should establish objectives which support decarbonisation of Industry and Business.
Energy Generation in Wales 2023	The Energy Generation in Wales 2023 report sets out the energy generation capacity in Wales at the end of 2023 and analyses changes over time. The report aims to support the Welsh Government in developing energy policy and help to evidence the economic, social, and environmental benefits of Welsh energy projects.	For information
Challenges and Opportunities of decarbonising Wales'	Decarbonising the electricity generation system in Wales will be a necessary step towards reaching net zero. This note summarises the challenges and opportunities electricity decarbonisation will present, within the context of Welsh and UK policy. It forms part of WCPP's work to support the Wales Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group, which was established	The AoS should establish objectives which support

energy system by 2035 (2023)	as part of the Welsh Labour / Plaid Cymru Co-operation agreement to examine potential pathways to net zero by 2035. Specifically, it is a contribution to challenge area 2: How could Wales meet energy needs by 2035 while phasing out fossil fuels?	decarbonisation of energy systems.
TRANSPORT		
Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021	<p>The Wales Transport Strategy sets out the vision for an accessible, sustainable and efficient transport system. The Strategy sets out three priorities over the next 5 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority 1: Bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel • Priority 2: Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure • Priority 3: Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport 	The AoS should consider objectives which support the use of sustainable transport.
AIR QUALITY		
Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act 2024	<p>The Act seeks to improve the quality of the air environment and reduce the impacts of airborne pollution on human health, nature, the environment and our economy.</p> <p>The Act includes duties for Welsh ministers to set at least one long-term target in respect of the annual mean level of PM2.5 in ambient air in Wales and set long-term targets in respect of one of the following pollutants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ammonia; • PM10; • ground level ozone; • nitrogen dioxide; 	The AoS should consider objectives which support the improvement of air quality.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carbon monoxide; • sulphur dioxide 	
Clean Air Plan for Wales: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales (2020)	<p>The aim of the Clean Air Plan for Wales is to improve air quality and reduce the impacts of air pollution on human health, biodiversity, the natural environment and our economy.</p> <p>The Plan is structured around four core themes, with actions to enable collaborative approaches to reducing air pollution.</p> <p>People: Protecting the health and well-being of current and future generations</p> <p>Environment: Taking action to support our natural environment, ecosystems and biodiversity</p> <p>Prosperity: Working with industry to reduce emissions, supporting a cleaner and more prosperous Wales</p> <p>Place: Creating sustainable places through better planning, infrastructure and transport.</p>	The AoS should consider objectives which support the improvement of air quality.
The Air Quality Standards (Wales) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Air Quality Standards (Wales) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	The Air Quality Standards (Wales) Regulations 2010 set out definitions, designates the Welsh Ministers as the competent authority and requires the Welsh Ministers to divide Wales into zones and agglomerations for the purposes of these Regulations. The Regulations also deal with the assessment of ambient air quality and imposes certain requirements on the Welsh Ministers to draw up air quality plans in relation to limit values and target values and short-term action plans in relation to alert thresholds. These regulations are amended by The Air Quality Standards (Wales) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.	The AoS framework should consider including objectives which seek to limit air pollution and improve air quality.
NOISE		

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Environmental Noise (Wales) Regulations 2006	These Regulations implement Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2002 relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. Duties include the requirement for National Assembly for Wales (the Assembly) to identify the noise sources for which strategic noise maps must be made and for the Assembly to make strategic noise maps for agglomerations, major roads, major railways and major airports. They also set out that the Assembly must publish guidance on how the priorities in action plans should be identified and sets out the requirements for the action plans.	Ensure that AoS ensures environmental noise is addressed.
Welsh Government Noise and Soundscape Plan for Wales 2023 to 2028	The Noise and Soundscape Plan 2023-2028 is Wales's national strategy on soundscapes, meaning the sound environment as perceived or experienced and/or understood by a person or people, in context.	Ensure that AoS ensures noise is addressed.
Scotland		
CROSS-THEMATIC		
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a means of drawing together, in a systematic way, an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects arising from a proposed development.	Energy infrastructure has the potential to full under Schedule 1 and 2 developments in the EIA 2011 regulations and therefore would

		be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment.
The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013	This Order provides for procedures connected with Pre-application consultation, applications for planning permission, the planning authority, consultations, local development orders, certificates of lawful use or development and the maintenance of registers of planning applications.	AoS Objectives which seek to protect the environment as a result of development should be considered.
National Planning Framework 4 (2023)	<p>Sets out Scotland’s spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy.</p> <p>Part 1 – A National Spatial Strategy for Scotland 2045</p> <p>Sets out 6 overarching spatial principles which play a key role in delivering UN SDGs and Scottish national outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just transition • Conserving and recycling assets • Local living • Compact urban growth • Rebalanced development • Rural revitalisation 	The AoS needs to include a comprehensive set of objectives that promote environmental protection.

	<p>Part 2 – National Planning Policy</p> <p>Sets out 33 policies on topics including: tackling the climate and nature crises, climate mitigation and action, and biodiversity.</p>	
<p>Planning Advice Note (PAN) 3/2010 Community Engagement</p>	<p>Sets out effective community engagement in the planning process.</p>	<p>The AoS process should consider objectives which include effective community engagement in the planning process.</p>
<p>PAN 33 Development of Contaminated Land (Revised Oct 2000)</p>	<p>Sets out the role of the planning system in addressing historical contamination. It considers:</p> <p>The implications of the new contaminated land regime for the planning system;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of contaminated land; • the approach to contaminated land in development plans; • the determination of planning applications when the site is or may be contaminated, and; • where further information and advice can be found. 	<p>The AoS should consider objectives which address the assessment and use of contaminated land sites.</p> <p>Contaminated land sites may be suitable for the development of energy infrastructure if appropriate</p>

		management measures are implemented.
PAN 51 Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation (Revised 2006)	Supports the existing policy role of the planning system in relation to the environmental protection regimes.	The AoS should consider a comprehensive set of objectives that promote environmental protection such that they complement environmental targets and positively work towards their achievement.
PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology (2011)	This PAN is intended to inform the day-to-day work of a range of local authority advisory services and other organisations that have a role in the handling of archaeological matters within the planning process.	The AoS should consider archaeology through the inclusion of an objective relating to the historic environment.

PAN 71 Conservation Area Management (2004)	This PAN complements existing national policy and provides further advice on the management of conservation areas. It identifies good practice for managing change, sets out a checklist for appraising conservation areas and provides advice on funding and implementation.	The AoS should take into account the potential impact of development in Conservation Areas.
PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage (2000)	This PAN provides advice on how development and the planning system can contribute to the conservation, enhancement, enjoyment and understanding of Scotland's natural environment and encourages developers and planning authorities to be positive and creative in addressing natural heritage issues.	Natural heritage should be considered in the AoS and the framework should include objectives to conserve and safeguard native species, wildlife habitats, ecosystems, geology and natural beauty and amenity of the countryside.
PAN 1/2011 Planning and Noise (2011)	This PAN provides advice on the role of the planning system in helping to prevent and limit the adverse effects of noise.	The AoS should consider objectives which

		address noise impacts during construction, operation and decommissioning.
PAN 61 Waste Management Planning (2001)	<p>The purpose of this PAN is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice on a sustainable approach and change of emphasis from waste disposal to integrated waste management; • Assist planning authorities in ensuring that development plans reflect the land use requirements for the delivery of an integrated network of waste management facilities; • Provide a basis for more informed consideration of development proposals for waste management facilities; • Enable planning authorities to implement the emerging and future Area Waste Plans; and • Provide developers seeking planning permission for waste management facilities with advice on the issues taken into consideration when determining applications. 	The AoS must address development and operation of energy facilities would generate waste and potentially increase the amount of waste needing long-term disposal.
Blue Economy Vision for Scotland	The Vision sets out Scotland's long-term ambition for blue economy to 2045. It demonstrates how much Scotland values its marine environment and its significance. This is captured in six outcomes sitting across a range of environmental, social and economic ambitions.	The AoS should ensure protection of the marine environment and consider economic impacts.

HERITAGE		
Historic Environment Policy for Scotland 2019	This policy statement is designed to support and enable good decision-making about changes to the historic environment. HEPS sets out a series of principles and policies for the recognition, care and sustainable management of the historic environment. It is relevant to a wide range of decision-making at national and local levels. It is supported by detailed policy and guidance.	The AoS should consider including objectives which aim to protect heritage assets and the historic environment.
Our Past, Our Future, The Strategy for Scotland's Historic Environment 2023	Our Past, Our Future is Scotland's national strategy for the historic environment for the period 2023-2028. Our Past, Our Future is mission-orientated, driving forward a collective sector approach to sustaining and enhancing the benefits of Scotland's historic environment for people and communities, now and into the future. It targets activity where the historic environment can deliver the most benefit for the people of Scotland over the next years. A national strategy team, hosted by Historic Environment Scotland work to support the strategy implementation, delivery and reporting.	The AoS should consider including objectives which aim to protect heritage assets and the historic environment.
BIODIVERSITY		
The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (Authorised Operations) Order 2011	<p>This Order describes the types of operations undertaken which affect a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) but which do not require the consent of Scottish Natural Heritage under sections 13 (operations by public bodies etc.) and 16 (operations by owners or occupiers of sites of special scientific interest) of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.</p> <p>The Regulations are of relevance to environmental planning projects as well as remediation projects. Their overall aim is to protect and conserve species in the UK.</p>	The AoS should take into account impacts upon habitats and species, and should consider provision for the preservation and protection of

		biodiversity and the environment.
Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 (2022)	<p>Sets out the framework for addressing the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.</p> <p>The strategy identifies the vision of a future where Scotland’s natural environment is restored and supports thriving communities and wildlife. The strategy proposes outcomes and key actions that will enable this vision to be achieved.</p>	Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.
Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan 2024–2030	This is the first in a series of delivery plans which form part of Scotland’s strategic framework for biodiversity, in conjunction with the Scottish biodiversity strategy. It includes actions needed to ensure Scotland is on track to achieving the vision and outcomes in the strategy.	Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.
Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (as amended)	<p>The Act affected game-shooting, species protection, and introduced new wildlife offences into Scotland such as vicarious liability. Amongst other things it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> abolished the designation of areas of special protection for wild birds; increased regulation of snaring practices; introduced a closed season for the killing of mountain hares; introduced a new regime for controlling invasive non-native species; changed arrangements for deer management and deer stalking; 	Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthened badger protection; required Scottish Ministers to present an annual report to Parliament of offences relating to wildlife crime; changed the legislation relating to the burning of moorland (muirburn), previously prescribed in the Hill Farming Act 1946; made operational changes to how Sites of Special Scientific Interest are managed; required three-yearly reports to be published by public bodies on compliance with the Biodiversity Duty. 	
Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029	<p>This Strategy provides an overview of contemporary Scottish forestry, presents a 50-year vision for Scotland's forests and woodlands, and sets out a 10-year framework for action.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland's sustainable and inclusive economic growth Improve the resilience of Scotland's forests and woodlands and increase their contribution to a healthy and high quality environment Increase the use of Scotland's forest and woodland resources to enable more people to improve their health, well-being and life chances <p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands 	<p>The AoS framework should consider objectives which focus upon environmental protection and the avoidance of loss of forests.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands • Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands 	
Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018	<p>The Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018 makes new provisions regarding Scottish Ministers' functions in relation to forestry.</p> <p>The Act sets out the following, among other things;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a duty to prepare a forestry strategy; • a duty to promote sustainable forest management; and • permissions and rules regarding felling. 	The AoS framework should consider objectives which focus upon avoidance of loss of forests.
Forestry (Felling) (Scotland) Regulations 2019	The Regulations set out the process for applications for felling permission, directions for restocking, directions for felling and rules surrounding appeals and compensation.	The AoS should consider the potential impacts of tree felling.
Control of Woodland Removal 2012	At a national scale Scotland is continuing to expand its woodland resource, to counteract historic deforestation. The Scottish Government has developed a policy on the control of woodland removal to provide direction for decisions on woodland removal in Scotland.	The AoS will need to consider control of woodland removal.
The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation	The regulations are made under the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by sections 160(8), 161(3) and (4), 173 and 275 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act.	The AoS needs to recognise the importance of trees, including those which may be isolated, or of

Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2010	<p>The Regulations require an application to be made for cutting down, topping, lopping or uprooting of any tree with a tree preservation order or within a Conservation Area. This application must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specify the operations for which consent is sought; • give reasons for carrying out such operations; • identify the protected tree or trees which would be affected by such operations; and • The protected tree or trees must be identified by means of a map or plan of a size and scale sufficient for the purpose. 	particular age (veteran trees) and which may be of importance in a local context.
AIR QUALITY		
The Air Quality Standards (Scotland) Regulations (2010)	<p>Regulations made under powers conferred by section 2(2) of the European Communities Act.</p> <p>It details the limit or target values for several pollutants considered of concern for human health for the purpose of Air Quality Management.</p>	The AoS should seek objectives to avoid air quality impacts. New power stations have the potential to result in emissions to air throughout the project lifecycle.
The Air Quality (Scotland) Amendments Regulations 2016	<p>The regulations set out the objectives adopted in Scotland for the purpose of Local Air Quality Management.</p> <p>The achievement or likely achievement of an air quality objective prescribed by the regulations shall be determined by reference to the quality of air at locations; which are</p>	The AoS should seek objectives to avoid air quality impacts. New power stations

	situated outside of buildings or other natural or man-made structures; and where members of the public are regularly present.	have the potential to result in emissions to air throughout the project lifecycle.
Cleaner Air for Scotland – the Road to a healthier future (the Scottish Government 2015)	The purpose of Cleaner Air for Scotland – The Road to a Healthier Future (CAFS) is to provide a national framework which sets out how the Scottish Government and its partner organisations propose to achieve further reductions in air pollution and fulfil legal responsibilities as soon as possible.	The AoS should seek objectives to avoid air quality impacts. New power stations have the potential to result in emissions to air throughout the project lifecycle.
CONTAMINATED LAND		
Contaminated Land (Scotland) Regulations (2000 and 2005)	<p>Regulations made to ensure the proper management and remediation of contaminated land which is causing or has the potential to cause significant harm or significant pollution of the water environment.</p> <p>These have been produced by Scottish Ministers in exercise of powers under the Environmental Protection Act (1990). Topics covered include pollution of controlled waters, remediation notices and appeals to Scottish Ministers.</p>	Land contamination and potential impacts and how they can be addressed should be considered in the AoS.

NOISE		
Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations (2006) (as amended)	<p>The Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations 2006 introduced strategic noise mapping and noise action planning for areas such as large urban areas and major transport corridors.</p> <p>It is stated that Scottish Ministers must prepare Strategic Noise Maps and Noise Action Plans which identify Quiet Areas and areas where management of noise is required- identified as Noise Management Areas (NMAs). The Noise Action Plans must include measures to manage noise.</p>	Noise and vibration impacts to local population should be considered in the AoS.
CLIMATE CHANGE		
Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	<p>An Act of the Scottish Parliament to set a target for the year 2050, an interim target for the year 2020, and to provide for annual targets, for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; to provide about the giving of advice to the Scottish Ministers relating to climate change; to confer power on Ministers to impose climate change duties on public bodies; to make further provision about mitigation of and adaptation to climate change; to make provision about energy efficiency, including provision enabling council tax discounts; to make provision about the reduction and recycling of waste; and for connected purposes.</p>	<p>AoS objectives should seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions during other stages of energy infrastructure development, for example, the transportation of raw materials and waste.</p> <p>The AoS should consider objectives which</p>

		improve the resilience of energy infrastructure to changing climatic conditions throughout the project's lifecycle.
Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019	<p>The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, which amends the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, sets targets to reduce Scotland's emissions of all greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045 at the latest, with interim targets for reductions of at least 56% by 2020, 75% by 2030, 90% by 2040.</p> <p>The Act embeds the principles of a Just Transition, which means reducing emissions in a way which tackles inequality and promotes fair work, at the heart of Scotland's approach to reaching net-zero.</p>	The AoS should consider objectives to reduce GHG emissions throughout the project's lifecycle.
Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: climate change plan 2018–2032 - update	<p>This update to Scotland's 2018-2032 Climate Change Plan sets out the Scottish Government's pathway to the new and ambitious targets set by the Climate Change Act 2019. It is a key strategic document on the green recovery from COVID-19. The Government have committed to reduce emissions by 75% by 2030 (compared with 1990) and to net zero by 2045</p> <p>Part 1 of the Update sets out the progress that is being made in delivering the commitments and the further actions to be taken to secure a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Part 2 of the update is dedicated to the 'Coordinated Approach' to meeting the emissions reduction targets. This section looks at how to take a cross-cutting, systems based approach that harnesses opportunities for inclusive jobs, growth and well-being.</p>	AoS objectives should seek to ensure that development is resilient and adaptable to the impacts of climate change, throughout the project lifecycle.

<p>Climate Ready Scotland Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme (2019- 2024)</p>	<p>The second Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme sets out policies and proposals to prepare Scotland for the challenges that will be faced as our climate continues to change in the decades ahead. The Programme is a requirement of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and addresses the risks set out in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (UK CCRA) 2017, published under section 56 of the UK Climate Change Act 2008.</p> <p>The Programme takes an outcomes-based approach, derived from both the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Scotland’s National Performance Framework. There are seven outcomes in the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome 1: Our communities are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe in response to the changing climate • Outcome 2: The people in Scotland who are most vulnerable to climate change are able to adapt and climate justice is embedded in climate change adaptation policy • Outcome 3: Our inclusive and sustainable economy is flexible, adaptable and responsive to the changing climate. • Outcome 4: Our society’s supporting systems are resilient to climate change • Outcome 5: Our natural environment is valued, enjoyed, protected and enhanced and has increased resilience to climate change • Outcome 6: Our coastal and marine environment is valued, enjoyed, protected and enhanced and has increased resilience to climate change • Outcome 7: Our international networks are adaptable to climate change. 	<p>AoS objectives should seek to ensure that development is resilient and adaptable to the impacts of climate change, throughout the project lifecycle.</p>
<p>WATER ENVIRONMENT</p>		

<p>The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011</p>	<p>The Regulations– more commonly known as the Controlled Activity Regulations (CAR) – and their further amendments apply regulatory controls over activities which may affect Scotland’s water environment. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • groundwater, • wetlands (directly associated with surface and groundwater bodies); • rivers; • lochs; • transitional waters (estuaries and saline lagoons); and • coastal waters (3nm from territorial baseline). <p>The controlled activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • abstractions from surface and groundwater; • impoundments of rivers, lochs, wetlands and transitional waters; • groundwater recharge; • engineering in rivers, lochs and wetlands; • engineering activities in the vicinity of rivers, lochs and wetland which are likely to have a significant adverse impact upon the water environment; • activities liable to cause pollution; • direct or indirect discharge of List I substances to groundwater; • any other activities which directly or indirectly is liable to cause a significant adverse impact upon the water environment. <p>In order to ensure proportionate controls over activities, the Regulations provide for three levels of control: General Binding Rules (GBR), Registrations and Water Use Licences.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider objectives which focus on the protection of all aspects of the water environment.</p>
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	SEPA can move activities between registration and licences and from GBR to registration or licences as it considers necessary in order to protect the water environment.	
Flood Risk Management Act (Scotland) 2009	The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 introduced a more sustainable and modern approach to flood risk management. It designated all local authorities, SEPA, Scottish Water and Scottish Ministers, as ‘Responsible Authorities’, and laid the duty upon them to work to reduce flood risk. It placed a great deal of emphasis on the importance of partnership working and co-operation among authorities to help achieve the goal of reducing flood risk.	Ensure that flood risk management is included as an objective within the AoS framework.
The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010	<p>The Marine (Scotland) Act provides a framework which will help balance competing demands on Scotland's seas. It introduces a duty to protect and enhance the marine environment and includes measures to help boost economic investment and growth in areas such as marine renewables.</p> <p>The main measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine planning: a new statutory marine planning system to sustainably manage the increasing, and often conflicting, demands on our seas • Marine licensing: a simpler licensing system, minimising the number of licences required for development in the marine environment to cut bureaucracy and encourage economic investment • Marine conservation: improved marine nature and historic conservation with new powers to protect and manage areas of importance for marine wildlife, habitats and historic monuments • Seal conservation: much improved protection for seals and a new comprehensive licence system to ensure appropriate management when necessary • Enforcement: a range of enhanced powers of marine conservation and licensing 	Ensure that AoS framework addresses competing demands on seas

The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017	The regulations requires that certain types of project with the potential to significantly affect the environment have an environmental impact assessment before a marine licence decision is made.	The AoS should consider where EIAs are required if projects have the potential to significantly affect the environment.
Scotland's National Marine Plan 2015	<p>This plan covers the management of both Scottish inshore waters (out to 12 nautical miles) and offshore waters (12 to 200 nautical miles). The plans vision for the marine environment is:</p> <p>‘Clean, healthy, safe, productive and diverse seas; managed to meet the long term needs of nature and people.’</p>	The AoS should consider objectives which focus on the protection of the water environment.
WASTE		
Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010)	<p>The plan sets the strategic direction for waste policy for Scotland, informed by improved understanding of the environmental consequences of how we use and dispose of resources, and by the requirements of European legislation. The Zero Waste Plan is underpinned by a determination to achieve the best overall outcomes for Scotland's environment, by making best practical use of the approach in the waste management hierarchy: waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery.</p> <p>This Zero Waste Plan is deliberately concise and strategic in its approach. It looks to set the goals Scotland needs to achieve in the future, and focuses on the key areas of activity with the potential to make the greatest contribution to deliver those goals. At the heart of the Zero</p>	The AoS should consider waste recycling from the construction and operation of energy infrastructure.

	Waste Plan is a change of mindset, a need for every one of us to start viewing waste as a potential resource and to think about how to use that resource most efficiently.	
The Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012	<p>These regulations outline and expand on the duty of care responsibilities of businesses with respect to waste they produce.</p> <p>The main compliance actions are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segregate, store and transport your waste appropriately and securely • Check that your waste is transported and handled by people or businesses that are authorised to do so • Complete waste transfer notes to document all waste you transfer, and keep them as a record for at least two years. • Take all reasonable steps to apply the waste management hierarchy before disposing of waste <p>From 1 January 2014, ensure glass, metal, plastic, paper and card is separated for collection. Take steps to avoid cross contamination of these materials</p>	<p>The AoS should promote the reduction of waste sent for disposal and encourage re-use, recycling and recovery of waste should be considered.</p> <p>The AoS should also take account of the fact that radioactive waste will be created which will have to be managed.</p>
ENERGY		
Scottish Energy Strategy: The Future of Energy in Scotland 2017	<p>The Strategy sets out the Scottish energy strategy for the period until 2050 and includes 2030 ‘whole-system’ energy targets relating to renewables and energy efficiency. The Strategy is consistent with the Scottish Climate Change Act. The 2050 vision of the Scottish Energy Strategy priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency; 	For information

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable and low carbon solutions; • Consumer engagement and protection; • System security and flexibility; • Innovative local energy systems; and • Strengthening the oil and gas industries. <p>The Strategy is duty bound to assess new technologies and low carbon energy solutions.</p> <p>Note: a draft of the Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan was published in 2023, as of January 2025 formal issue is not yet available. The draft reiterates Scotland’s firm opposition to building new nuclear power plants using current technologies.</p>	
Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan 2023	The Strategy’s vision is for Scotland to have an energy system that delivers affordable, resilient and clean energy supplies for Scotland’s households, communities and business, to be achieved by 2045. The Strategy also sets out its aim to promote regional and local energy projects for community benefit and create more jobs in the renewable energy sector.	For information
Northern Ireland		
CROSS-THEMATIC		
Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2023	The Environment Strategy sets out Northern Ireland’s environmental priorities for the coming decades and forms part of the Executive’s Green Growth agenda. As such it includes a mix of both existing and new environmental targets / objectives for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and all Northern Ireland Departments with a role in improving the environment.	The AoS should acknowledge that Northern Ireland has this new Environment Strategy.

<p>The Draft Green Growth Strategy</p>	<p>This draft Strategy establishes NIs Green Growth vision and principles and sets out our commitments to tackling the climate crisis. A detailed Climate Action Plan is currently being developed, which will set out what will be done to deliver this. This strategy provides the overarching framework that brings together existing strategies and policies of government that supports the delivery of climate action, for example, the Energy Strategy.</p> <p>Ten executive commitments have been set out within this strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding Green Growth – ensure that Green Growth is central to all policy and budgetary decisions by introducing a statutory Green Growth test and making Green Growth a budgetary priority • Legislating for Change - introduce legislation for reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the UK’s ambition to achieve net zero by 2050 and, to deliver upon this, we will develop clear targets and pathways in a Climate Action Plan from 2022 • A Fair Transition - ensure that the transition made will be a “Just Transition”, fair for all citizens, and will establish a Just Transition Commission in 2022 • People First - put citizens at the heart of the Green Growth policy development and delivery by ensuring ongoing engagement with young people and other key groups, including a Citizen Assembly Panel • Supporting Behavioural Change - promote behavioural change by providing low carbon options, infrastructure, timely information, advice and support to citizens and businesses to enable them to make informed choices on the transition to a low emissions economy • Evidence Based Decision Making - ensure decisions and actions associated with the transition to low emissions, green jobs and a clean environment are underpinned by robust and timely evidence and science • Investing in Green Growth - transform the economy by working proactively with businesses, communities and all parts of government to maximise funding and 	<p>The AoS will need to consider the commitments of the Green Growth strategy and implications of actions for delivering climate action.</p>
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	<p>investment opportunities for Green Growth and promote innovation, skills, research and technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading by Example - provide public sector leadership by delivering a government estate and fleet with net zero operational carbon emissions and ensure a Green Growth aligned procurement strategy for all government spend • Working with Others - commit to ensure all government departments and the wider public sector work together to maximise decarbonisation efforts, and will work in partnership with neighbours across UK regions and the Republic of Ireland <p>Measuring Progress - ensure sound governance and reporting arrangements for the delivery of the Green Growth Strategy and Climate Action Plan by recommending that the Assembly establish a Standing Committee on Climate Action and agree a monitoring framework for measuring progress.</p>	
<p>The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) for Northern Ireland</p>	<p>The objective of the planning system, consistent with Part 1, Section 1 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, is to secure the orderly and consistent development of land whilst furthering sustainable development and improving well-being. This means the planning system should positively and proactively facilitate development that contributes to a more socially economically and environmentally sustainable Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The planning system sets out the following core planning principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Health and Well-being • Creating and Enhancing Shared Space • Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth • Supporting Good Design and Positive Place Making • Preserving and Improving the Built and Natural Environment 	<p>The AoS will need to consider implications of key actions for development, especially regarding natural heritage and renewable energy.</p>

	<p>Within this planning system are a set of Planning Policy Statements (PPS) covering a variety of areas, to be implemented within and replaced by Local Development Plans when adopted.</p> <p>The Natural Heritage PPS (PPS2) sets out the department of the Environment's planning policies for the conservation, protection and enhancement of Northern Ireland's natural heritage. It sets out the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to seek to conserve, enhance and restore the abundance, quality, diversity and distinctiveness of the region's natural heritage; • to promote sustainable development; and • to assist in meeting international, European, national and local responsibilities and obligations for natural heritage. <p>Also of note is the Renewable Energy PPS (PPS 18) which sets out the Department's planning policy for development that generates energy from renewable resources and that requires the submission of a planning application. It also encourages the integration of renewable energy technology and greater application of the principles of Passive Solar Design in the design, siting and layout of new development. The objectives of the statement are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ensure that the environmental, landscape, visual and amenity impacts associated with or arising from renewable energy development are adequately addressed; • to ensure adequate protection of the Region's built and natural, and cultural heritage features; and <p>to facilitate the integration of renewable energy technology into the design, siting and layout of new development and promote greater application of the principles of Passive Solar Design.</p>	
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<p>The Environment Improvement Plan for Northern Ireland 2023</p>	<p>The Plan is the first five year review of the 25 year Environment plan and sets out the plan to deliver it. The Plan uses the ten goals set out in the 25-year Environment plan and sets out progress made against these, the targets and commitments for each and the plan to continue to deliver these targets and the overarching goals.</p> <p>Northern Ireland's Plan, which was due to be published July 2023, will set out how DAERA, and other NI departments, intend to take to improve the natural environment, including measures needed to meet its long-term and interim targets.</p> <p>The preparation and publication of an EIP is a statutory duty placed upon the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) by Schedule 2 to the Environment Act 2021 (the Act).</p>	<p>Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity aligns with the targets and commitments of the plan, and is included in an objective within the AoS.</p>
<p>MARINE ENVIRONMENT</p>		
<p>Marine Plan for Northern Ireland 2022</p>	<p>The Marine Plan provides a framework of policies to be considered by public authorities taking decisions which affect or might affect the marine area through decision making processes. It is a material consideration in this regard. The Marine Plan (when adopted) will be used by Public Authorities in taking decisions which affect or might affect the marine area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorisation or enforcement decisions • Decisions that relate to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the marine area. <p>It is a single document made up of two plans, one for the inshore region and one for the offshore region. The inshore region extends from the Mean High Water Spring Tide mark out to, at most, 12 nautical miles (nm) and includes tidal rivers and sea loughs. The offshore</p>	<p>Development of certain new energy infrastructure may result in transboundary effects in Northern Ireland's marine environment which will need to be considered by the AoS.</p>

	region is the area that extends south-eastwardly from the 12nm territorial limit to the outer boundary of the Northern Ireland marine area (31nm at the farthest point).	
Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013	This Act provides marine plans in relation to the Northern Ireland inshore region, to provide for marine conservation zones within this region and to make further provision in relation to marine licensing for certain electricity works in that region. It promotes the Uks aim of establishing an ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas, so that marine biodiversity is protected, and international and European commitments are met.	The AoS should consider implications towards the protection of marine biodiversity and protected areas.
Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2026	This strategy sets out long-term objectives for achieving sustainable coastal management in Northern Ireland, through improvements to existing management systems, the development of new management systems and identifying and dealing with potential areas of conflict. It aims to establish sustainable levels of economic and social activity in our coastal areas while protecting the coastal environment.	The AoS should consider objectives which align with the aims of the strategy and protect the marine and coastal environment.
Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment 2014	<p>The aim of this study was to provide a strategic understanding of different areas of regional seascape character along the entire Northern Ireland coast, to contribute to the aims of the European Landscape Convention through promoting the protection, management and planning of the seascape, and to support European cooperation on landscape issues.</p> <p>The objectives of the study were to:</p>	The AoS should consider objectives which protect the marine and coastal environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and map the different regional seascape character areas; • Describe the key features and characteristics of each seascape character area; and • Relate the description of each seascape character area to its neighbouring terrestrial landscape character areas (as described in the Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment, 2000) and take account of boundaries identified in relation to neighbouring seascape areas for the British and Irish coastline. <p>The description and mapping of regional seascape character can provide practical tools and evidence to assist in responding to the increasing demands being placed upon the related marine and terrestrial environments.</p> <p>Data relating to coastal geomorphology can be viewed on the DAERA NI Coastal Maps:</p> <p>https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/b8454f3d62164518817e4c581b5555c8/page/Map-Viewers/</p>	
OSPAR Agreement (2024 update)	<p>The OSPAR Convention is a regional agreement by which 15 governments and the EU cooperate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic.</p> <p>The ‘List of Decisions, Recommendations and Other Agreements Applicable within the Framework of the OSPAR Convention - Update 2024’ sets out the actions to be taken by Contracting Parties, which are complemented by Other Agreements setting out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issues of importance; • agreed programmes of monitoring, information collection or other work which the Contracting Parties commit to carry out; • guidelines or guidance setting out the way that any programme or measure should be implemented; and • actions to be taken by the OSPAR Commission on behalf of the Contracting Parties 	The AoS should consider guidance and information provided by the convention when setting objectives on the protection of the marine environment.

<p>Northern Ireland Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) Strategy Review 2025</p>	<p>A review of the NI Marine Protected Areas Strategy occurred which was first published in 2014 and consultation on the Marine Protected Areas Strategy for the Northern Ireland Inshore Area 2024-2030 occurred in 2024.</p> <p>The first MPA Strategy set out what action the Department intended to take by 2020 to contribute to the delivery of an ecologically coherent MPA network in the North East Atlantic. The review seeks to maximise co-benefits that a well-managed MPA network can provide, such as improved wider biodiversity and protected nursery grounds for commercial fish species, and societal benefits, including improved water quality and opportunities for recreation, eco-tourism, improved health and increased ocean literacy.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider objectives which focus on the protection of the marine environment.</p>
<p>Northern Ireland Blue Carbon Action Plan Review 2025</p>	<p>The development of the Blue Carbon Action Plan took place in tandem with a review of the Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Strategy for the Northern Ireland inshore region (within 12 nautical miles of the coast). The concurrent review of the 2014 MPA Strategy offered a timely opportunity to consider the protection and restoration of blue carbon habitats within the existing MPA network, where appropriate.</p> <p>The Blue Carbon Action Plan for Northern reflects the need to embed nature-based projects in plans and policies to meet the Net Zero target.</p>	<p>The AoS should consider objectives which focus on the protection of the marine environment and climate.</p>
<p>Northern Ireland Seabird Conservation Strategy and Action Plan 2024 (consultation draft)</p>	<p>This strategy has been developed to restore and enhance seabird populations within marine areas and together with wider seabird strategies for England, Scotland and Wales, to improve the overall conservation status of seabird populations in the UK. Through this conservation strategy, the Department has proposed actions required to improve the evidence base for key species and what management may be necessary to halt population decline and help facilitate their recovery.</p> <p>Consultation on the Seabird Conservation Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland occurred in 2024.</p>	<p>Ensure the consideration if biodiversity protection</p>

Elasmobranch Conservation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2024 (consultation draft)	This Strategy has been developed to improve and restore elasmobranch populations (sharks, skates and rays) within the Northern Ireland marine area as current measures are not sufficient. Elasmobranch populations are assessed as part of the UK Marine Strategy and they are failing to meet Good Environmental Status (GES). Action is needed to help populations recover from past exploitation.	Ensure the consideration if biodiversity protection
CLIMATE CHANGE		
The Path to Net Zero Energy: Secure, Affordable, Clean 2021	<p>The aim of the strategy is to ensure that energy in Northern Ireland is secure, affordable and clean now and in future. The strategy sets the following three targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver energy efficiency savings of 25% from buildings and industry by 2030. • Meet at least 70% of electricity consumption from a diverse mix of renewable sources by 2030. • Double the size of Northern Ireland’s low carbon and renewable energy economy to a turnover of more than £2B by 2030. <p>The strategy centres around five key principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing people at the heart of energy future • Grow the green economy • Do more with less • Replace fossil fuels with renewable energy • Create a flexible, resilient and integrated energy system 	The AoS should note that Northern Ireland is on a path to clean energy now and in the future which excludes generation of nuclear energy within its boundaries.

Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022	Sets targets for the years 2030, 2040 and 2050 for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Provides a system for carbon budgeting and reporting against targets and budgets.	AoS objectives should seek to ensure that development is resilient and adaptable to the impacts of climate change, throughout the project lifecycle.
BIODIVERSITY		
The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended)	The Act establishes the protection of birds, other animals and other wildlife including wild plants and new species introductions. Specific details include methods for killing or taking birds or animals, protecting nests and eggs and the power to grant licenses. Amendments to the 1985 order are made with respect to birds, enabling licences to be granted for killing wild birds and animals whilst increasing protection for birds more generally.	Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.
Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) 2011	This Act amends the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 and the Environment (NI) Order 2002 and adds new provisions to protect a greater range of plants, animals, birds and to increase protection to Areas of Special Scientific Interest. It introduces new statutory duties upon government departments and public bodies to take action to further the conservation of biodiversity. Sections 4 to 28 of the Act relate to amendments to the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. Sections 29 to 34 relate to amendments to the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002.	Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.

The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended)	These regulations transpose the Habitats Directive in relation to Northern Ireland. They provide for the protection of sites in the UK that support habitats and species in need of conservation across Europe and full protection of species of European importance whether occurring within designated sites or not. The regulations include the power to grant protected species licences.	Ensure the protection of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.
The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002	This is the Order places obligations on individuals and organisations to protect and manage the environment. This includes reporting environmental incidents, obtaining permits, and complying with environmental standards.	Ensure the protection of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.
The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017	The Regulations are concerned with general rules and administrative matters regarding the environmental impact assessment of the effects of certain public and private developments. This includes: ensuring that a number of that EIA development cannot be permitted without the consideration of environmental information; set out the matters that confirm that development is EIA development; ensure that, where the proposed development also requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment, the environmental impact assessment is coordinated with that assessment.	The AoS should consider where EIAs are required if projects have the potential to significantly affect the environment.
Biodiversity Strategy for NI to 2020	This Strategy sets out how Northern Ireland plans to meet its international obligations and local targets to protect biodiversity and ensure that the environment can continue to support people and the economy. It builds upon the first Biodiversity Strategy published in 2002 but adopts the modern and internationally agreed approach that emphasises the management of biological systems to deliver the materials and services upon which people depend – the ecosystem services approach.	Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is included as an

	<p>A number of high-level challenges have been identified which will require particular attention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valuing the environment in the broadest context; • reducing the impact of climate change; • obtaining adequate resources for biodiversity projects from a wide range of sources; • encouraging ecosystem scale protection measures; • enhancing data gathering and management; • tackling invasive species; and • engaging society more fully to halt biodiversity loss. 	objective within the AoS.
Draft Environment Strategy NI	<p>Northern Ireland’s first Environment Strategy will form the basis for a coherent and effective set of interventions that can deliver real improvements in the quality of the environment and thereby: improve the health and well-being of all who live and work in Northern Ireland; create opportunities to develop Northern Ireland’s economy; elevate Northern Ireland to an environmental leader; and enable us to play our part in protecting the global environment for many decades to come. The Environment Strategy forms part of the Executive’s wider Green Growth agenda and, for the most part, is intended to be a high-level, Executive-endorsed strategy that will sit alongside both new and existing strategies.</p> <p>There are six Strategic Environmental Outcomes (SEOs) for the Environment Strategy, each with a set of actions, targets and desired outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent Air, Water, Land & Neighbourhood Quality; • Healthy & Accessible Environment & Landscapes Everyone Can Connect With & Enjoy; • Thriving, Resilient & Connected Nature & Wildlife; 	Ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is included as an objective within the AoS.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Production & Consumption On Land & At Sea; • Zero Waste & Highly Developed Circular Economy; and • Fair Contribution To UK Net Zero GHG Emissions & Improved Climate Resilience & Adaptability. 	
The Draft NI peatland policy	<p>The aim of this strategy is to provide a framework for both conserving intact peatlands and the peatland restoration programme. The vision of the strategy is to protect, enhance and manage sustainably peatland habitats, which are recognised for their intrinsic value and of the benefits they provide – for wildlife, people and climate. It sets out five strategic objectives and 24 supporting actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peatland Conservation, Restoration & Management; • Peatland Policies; • Capacity Building & Research; • Knowledge Sharing, Communication & Access; and • Governance, Implementation & Funding. 	The AoS must consider the protection and restoration of peatland.
The Environmental Liability (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009	<p>These regulations transpose the provisions of the EC Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) with regard to the prevention and remedying of environmental damage. They impose obligations on operators of economic activities to prevent, limit or remediate environmental damage. The regulations apply only to the more serious cases of environmental damage and are in addition to existing environmental legislation.</p>	The AoS must consider the environmental protection and remediation of environmental damage.
ENERGY		

<p>Northern Ireland Energy Strategy</p>	<p>The Energy Strategy sets out a roadmap to achieve the highest levels of energy efficiency by 2050 as part of wider action to address climate change. It sets out two targets to drive these changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Efficiency: Deliver energy savings of 25% from buildings and industry by 2030; and • Renewables: Meet at least 70% of electricity consumption from a diverse mix of renewable sources by 2030. This figure currently stands at 42%. <p>The Energy Strategy also focus on Green Energy. Currently energy accounts for almost 60% of Northern Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions. The Energy Strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce energy-related emissions by 56% by 2030 relative to 1990 levels in line with the Climate Change Committee’s (CCC) Carbon Budget Energy; • Grow Northern Ireland’s economy and supporting the 10X Economic Vision; • Double the size of Northern Ireland’s low carbon and renewable energy economy to more than £2bn turnover; and • Bring together the skills, technologies and behaviours needed to advance the vision of net zero carbon and affordable energy by 2050. 	<p>The AoS should consider targets and aims set out by the energy strategy.</p>
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Appendix D. Baseline Data and contextual information

Note that baseline data has been predominantly compiled through interpretation of open source, official and readily available data and statistics and includes, where relevant, the interpretation of Geographic Information Systems spatial data. Spatial data has also been mapped in a separate Appendix section in this document. While baseline review and data searches have been undertaken through late 2024 and January 2025 in order to provide a comprehensive basis from which to develop the AoS Framework, it is to be recognised that some sources are subject to infrequent review, maintenance or update. Where available source publishing dates or 'last updated' dates have been included in the baseline review and reference provided as footnotes.

Sustainability Topic / Baseline	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
Climate Change: Regional distribution of net greenhouse gas emissions	As of 2022, UK total net GHG emissions= 406.2 MtCO ₂ e ¹			
	In 2022, England's net GHG emissions was 313.2 MtCO ₂ e ² and had approximately 77.1% share of emissions in the UK.	In 2022, Scotland's net GHG emissions was 41.5 MtCO ₂ e and had approximately 13.3% share of emissions in the UK.	In 2022, Wales's net GHG emissions was 30.7 MtCO ₂ e and had approximately 7.6% share of emissions in the UK.	In 2022, Northern Ireland's GHG emissions was 20.9 MtCO ₂ e and had approximately 6.6% share of emissions in the UK.
	Supporting Trend Data: UK GHG emissions decreased overall from 1990 to 2022 driven largely by a switch from using coal and heavy-emitting fuels in the energy supply and manufacturing industries to lower emission fuels such as natural gas and, more recently, renewable sources. Household emissions that come from heating homes and travelling, for commuting, social, domestic or leisure purposes, have been the largest contributor since 2015 as the emissions from energy supply decreased. In 2019, net territorial emissions in the UK of greenhouse gases were estimated to be 454.8 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO ₂ e), a decrease of 2.8% compared to the 2018 figure of 468.1 million tonnes and 43.8% lower than they were in 1990 ³ . In 2020, net territorial greenhouse gas emissions in the UK were estimated to be 405.5 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO ₂ e), a decrease of 9.5% compared to the 2019 figure of 447.9 million tonnes and 49.7%			

¹ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2024) *2022 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions Summary*. Available at: [2022 UK Greenhouse Gas emissions: one page summary](#)

² National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (2024) *Greenhouse Gas Inventories for England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland: 1990-2022*. Available at: [Greenhouse Gas Inventories for England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland: 1990-2022 | National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory](#)

³ Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2021) *2019 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures*. Available: [2019 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures](#)

lower than they were in 1990. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the resulting restrictions introduced in 2020 across the UK had major impacts on various aspects of society and the economy, which led to a significant decrease in GHG emissions⁴.

In 2021, net territorial GHG emissions in the UK were estimated to be 426.5 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO₂e), an increase of 5.0% from the 2020 figure of 406.3 million tonnes, but still 5.3% lower than in 2019, the most recent pre-pandemic year⁵.

In 2022, net territorial emissions in the UK of greenhouse gases were estimated to be 406.2 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO₂e), which down 3.5% compared to 2021 and 50.0% lower than in 1990⁶.

Emissions of CO₂ are by far the largest component of total UK GHG emissions, of which the largest sources are power generation and road transport. Emissions have reduced from 1990 due to fuel switching, structural change, and improvements in end-use efficiency. The strong link between power generation and CO₂ emissions means that short term trends can be dominated by UK temperatures. In cold years like 1996 and 2010 there was an increase in demand for power for heating and in warm years like 2011 and 2014 there was a decrease. The second most important source of greenhouse gases is methane (CH₄). Annual emissions of CH₄ have reduced by over half since 1990. The main sources of CH₄ are agriculture, waste disposal, leakage from the gas distribution system and coal mining. Reductions in CH₄ emissions in the UK are driven by the increased utilisation of methane from landfills, a large decline in UK coal mining, investment in improvements to the natural gas supply infrastructure to reduce leakage and a reduction in livestock numbers. Emissions of nitrous oxide (N₂O) have also reduced by over half since 1990. Most N₂O emissions are generated from the agriculture sector, Agriculture sector N₂O emissions have decreased primarily due to reduced emissions from synthetic fertiliser application. N₂O is also released during the production of nitric and adipic acid, a significant source in 1990 contributing to approximately half of all N₂O emissions. Due to a decline in production together with the installation of abatement equipment, the Industrial Processes and Other Product Use (IPPU) sector now only contribute around 4% of N₂O emissions. The smallest percentage reduction in emissions across the time series is for the F gases: HFCs, PFCs, NF₃ and SF₆. F-gas

⁴ Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2022) *2020 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures*. Available: [2020 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures](#)

⁵ Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2023) *2021 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures*. Available: [2021 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures](#)

⁶ Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (2024) *2022 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions*. Available: [2022 UK Greenhouse Gas emissions: one page summary](#)

	<p>emissions have decreased since 1995, due mainly to the fall in F gas manufacture in the UK and the installation of abatement equipment at two of the three UK manufacturers. These emission reductions have been to some extent offset by the increases in the use of HFCs as substitutes for ozone depleting substances, particularly in refrigeration and air conditioning.⁷</p> <p>Under the UK Climate Change Act 2008, the UK has so far set six ‘carbon budgets’. These set interim five-year caps on emissions from 2008 to 2037. The UK is currently in the fourth budget period (2023 to 2027). Despite meeting the first three carbon budget it is not on track to meet the fourth (2023-27) or the fifth (2028-32) which require a 50% and 57% reduction in emissions below the base year. The sixth carbon budget for 2033-2037 would require a 78% reduction and the seventh budget for 2038-2042 a reduction of 87%. It is reported that emissions reductions will need to outperform the fourth carbon budget to be on a path to achieve the UK’s 2030 Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), the Sixth Carbon Budget and Net Zero.⁸</p>
<p>Climate change:</p> <p>Contribution of sectors to greenhouse gas emissions</p>	<p>In 2021, the UK total net GHG emissions per sector in UK were⁹:</p> <p>Agriculture: 47,682.95 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Buildings and product uses: 82,751.36 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Industrial processes: 57,358.12 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Fuel Supply: 30,778.78 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Electricity Supply: 54,869.51 ktCO₂e</p> <p>International aviation and shipping: 34,765.86 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Domestic transport: 11,3210.10 ktCO₂e</p>

⁷ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2023) *UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory, 1990 to 2021*. Available: [UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory, 1990 to 2021](#)

⁸ Climate Change Committee (2024) *2024 Progress Report to Parliament*. Available: [Progress in reducing emissions 2024 Report to Parliament - Climate Change Committee](#)

⁹ National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (2023) *UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory, 1990 to 2021*. Available: [UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory, 1990 to 2021](#)

<p>Waste: 18,765.41 ktCO₂e</p> <p>LULUCF: 757.91 ktCO₂e</p> <p>A check of DESNZ's information for individual sectors greenhouse gas emissions in January 2025 shows the most recent data available as of April 2023.</p>				
<p>In 2021, the total net GHG emissions per sector in England were:</p> <p>Agriculture: 28,147.53 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Buildings and product uses: 67,877.27 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Industrial Processes; 40,285.42 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Fuel supply: 13,043.66 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Electricity Supply: 43,297.41 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Domestic Transport: 92,193.45 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Waste: 15,374.08 ktCO₂e</p>	<p>In 2021, the total net GHG emissions per sector in Scotland were:</p> <p>Agriculture: 7,31.65 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Buildings and product uses: 7,487.05 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Industrial Processes; 5,494.66 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Fuel supply: 3,328.81 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Electricity Supply: 1,749.75 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Domestic Transport: 11,489.36 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Waste: 1,607.26 ktCO₂e</p>	<p>In 2021, the total net GHG emissions per sector in Wales were:</p> <p>Agriculture: 5,595.77 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Buildings and product uses: 4117.42 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Industrial Processes; 9,507.55 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Fuel supply: 3,426.05 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Electricity Supply: 6,843.73 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Domestic Transport: 5,653.14 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Waste: 1,014.93 ktCO₂e</p>	<p>In 2021, the total net GHG emissions per sector in Northern Ireland were:</p> <p>Agriculture: 6,208.00 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Buildings and product uses: 3,269.61 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Industrial Processes; 2,070.49 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Fuel supply: 3.91 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Electricity Supply: 2,978.61 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Domestic Transport: 3,868.97 ktCO₂e</p> <p>Waste: 769.14 ktCO₂e</p>	

	LULUCF: -766.45 ktCO ₂ e	LULUCF: 218.65 ktCO ₂ e	LULUCF: -853.98 ktCO ₂ e	LULUCF: 2,159.69 ktCO ₂ e
	<p>Supporting Trend Data¹⁰:</p> <p>In 2022, emissions in the agricultural sector account for 12% of UK total emissions and have declined by 3% since 2019 and have declined by 12% since 1990.</p> <p>In 2022, emissions in the buildings and product uses sector account for 20% of UK total emissions and have declined by 12% since 2019 and have declined by 24% since 1990.</p> <p>In 2022, emissions in the industrial processes sector account for 14% of UK total emissions and have declined by 8% since 2019 and have declined by 63% since 1990.</p> <p>In 2022, emissions in the fuel supply sector account for 8.0% of UK total emissions and have declined by 17% since 2019 and have declined by 60% since 1990.</p> <p>In 2022, emissions in the electricity supply sector account for 14% of UK total emissions and have declined by 5% since 2019 and have declined by 73.1% since 1990.</p> <p>In 2022, emissions in the domestic transport sector account for 28% of UK total emissions and have declined by 10% since 2019 and by 12% since 1990.</p> <p>In 2022, emissions in the waste sector account for 5% of UK total emissions and have declined by 10% since 2019 and has declined by 74% since 1990.</p> <p>In 2022, emissions in the LULUCF sector account for 0.2% of UK total emissions</p>			

¹⁰ Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (2024) *2022 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions*. Available: [2022 UK Greenhouse Gas emissions: one page summary](#)

<p>Climate change:</p> <p>Climate Projections</p>	<p>The UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) and the State of the UK Climate reports (published annually)¹¹ identify the following observed trends which are attributed to climate change¹²:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most recent decade (2014–2023) has been on average 0.42°C warmer than the 1991–2020 average and 1.25°C warmer than 1961–1990. • The sea surface temperature in the UK for the most recent decade (2014–2023) has been on average 0.3°C warmer than the 1991–2020 average and 0.9°C warmer than 1961–1990. • Over the last 250 years in England and Wales, there has also been a slight trend for increased rainfall in winter and decreased rainfall in summer. • All regions of the UK have experienced an increase in the amount of winter rain that falls in heavy downpours. • 2023 was the seventh wettest year on record for the UK in the series from 1836, with 113% of the 1991–2020 average. Large areas of the UK exceeded 125% • Sea levels around the UK have risen by about 1mm/a year over the 20th century, although recent rates are slightly higher than this. Note that sea level rise will not be at a constant rate around the coast – local geomorphological conditions will dictate precise levels. <p>The UKCP18 projects the following changes within the UK by the 2080-2099 decades, relative to a 1981-2000 baseline, with a medium emissions scenario¹³:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average summer temperatures across the UK will increase by 1.2 – 4.5 °C; • Average summer rainfall will likely decrease, with projections ranging between -46 – +2%; • Average winter rainfall will likely increase, with projections ranging between -9 – +38%, and; • Sea levels in London will rise by 60 cm.
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¹¹ Kendon, M et al (2024) *State of the UK Climate 2023*. Available: [State of the UK Climate 2023 - Kendon - 2024 - International Journal of Climatology - Wiley Online Library](#)

¹² Lowe, J. A., et al. (2018): UK Climate Projections 18 Science Overview Report, Met Office, Exeter, UK. Available: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/ukcp18/science-reports/UKCP18-Overview-report.pdf>

¹³ Palmer, M., et al. (2018): UK Climate Projections 18 Marine Report, Met Office, Exeter, UK. Available: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/metofficegovuk/pdf/research/ukcp/ukcp18-marine-report-updated.pdf>

To provide context of how climate change may be manifested in individual regions, taking the north west region as an example, significant impacts across a range of sectors including health, infrastructure, economy and biodiversity are anticipated as a result of future changes in climate. Specifically, cold related illnesses and mortality are likely to decrease due to milder winter however, the number of incidents of food poisoning, heat stress and heat related deaths may increase in summer. Domestic energy use may decrease in winter due to higher temperatures however it may increase during summer months as refrigeration and air conditioning demand increases. Wetter winters and more intense rainfall events throughout the year may result in a higher risk of flooding from rivers.

National key findings for temperature, precipitation and sea level rise for the different emissions scenarios are also detailed within UKCP18 as follows:

Variable	Annual Temperature Change (°C)					Winter precipitation change (%)					Summer precipitation change (%)				
Percentile	5 th	10 th	50 th	90 th	95 th	5 th	10 th	50 th	90 th	95 th	5 th	10 th	50 th	90 th	95 th
High emissions	0.7	0.9	1.8	2.7	3.0	-5	-5	7	21	25	-35	-31	-15	0	3
Medium emissions	0.5	0.7	1.4	2.3	2.5	-10	-7	4	17	21	-30	-26	-13	2	6
Low emissions	0.3	0.5	1.2	2.0	2.3	-8	-5	5	16	19	-28	-24	-11	1	5

	5 th	Central	95 th
High emissions	53	84	115
Medium emissions	37	60	83
Low emissions	29	49	70

UKCP18 absolute time mean sea level change (cm) projections over the 21st century in London under 3 different scenarios, with 5th and 95th percentile confidence intervals. The changes are given for the year 2100 relative to the 1981-2000 average.

<p>Biodiversity and Ecosystems:</p> <p>Special Protection Areas (SPAs)</p>	<p>SPAs are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the, which came into force in April 1979. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds (as listed on Annex I of the Directive), and for regularly occurring migratory species¹⁴.</p> <p>SPAs are of national and international conservation importance.</p> <p>There are also ‘potential Special Protection Areas (pSPAs) which are potential site boundaries not yet classified¹⁵.</p> <p>Areas can be secured as sites compensating for damage to a European site (e.g. SPAs), and are protected by government policy.</p> <p>All the locations of SPAs are shown in Figures 2A and 2B</p>			
	<p>As of October 2024, there were 82 Classified SPAs in England, covering an area of 972,335 ha. There is one site crossing the England / Scotland border (135,750 ha), two across the England / Wales border (38,811 ha), two classified as England / offshore (747,933 ha) and one classified as England / Wales / Offshore (251,709 ha¹⁶. SPAs in England are predominantly located in coastal and estuarine</p>	<p>As of October 2024, there were 160 Classified SPAs in Scotland, covering an area of 1,709,659 ha. There is also one site crossing the England / Scotland border (135,750 ha.). SPAs are distributed widely throughout Scotland, with large concentrations in coastal and estuarine areas, islands and uplands.</p>	<p>As of October 2024, there were 17 Classified SPAs in Wales, covering an area of 342,141 ha. There are also two sites crossing the England / Wales border (38,811 ha), one classified as England / Wales / Offshore (251,709 ha) and one classified as Wales / Offshore (166,747 ha). SPAs are located in coastal and estuarine areas of Wales, with several situated in the central and northern</p>	<p>As of October 2024, there were 16 Classified SPAs in Northern Ireland, covering an area of 113,985 ha. SPAs in Northern Ireland are primarily located in coastal and estuarine areas.</p>

¹⁴ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2013) Special protection Areas. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-162>.

¹⁵ DEFRA (2019) *Potential Special Protection Areas (England)*. Available: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/b54f9a71-8ef7-4ffb-a85f-7d4e65fbd294>

¹⁶ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2024) Classified Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in the UK. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1399>.

	<p>areas, with various sites distributed inland. Currently, there are 46 SPAs with marine components designated partly or wholly within English waters. A total of 3 SPAs with marine components are located within both English and Welsh waters.</p>		<p>highlands. Currently, there are 10 SPAs with marine components designated partly or wholly within Welsh waters.</p>	
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>In the UK, the first SPAs were identified and classified in the early to mid-1980s. Classification has since progressed, with regular updating of both the number of classified SPAs and those that are in process of being classified (pSPA).</p> <p>In response to stakeholder consultation, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) convened an advisory group to take forward further consideration of SPA network development. The Third SPA Network Review, published in 2016, focused largely on terrestrial SPAs, but recognised the need for a review of implementation of the Birds Directive in the UK's marine environment¹⁷. As a result of this, it is likely that further marine SPAs will be designated in the future.</p>			
<p>Biodiversity and Ecosystems:</p> <p>Special Areas of</p>	<p>SACs are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. Article 3 of the Habitats Directive requires the establishment of a European network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive (as amended). The listed habitat types and species are those considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds). Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) are sites that have been adopted by the European Commission but not yet formally designated by the government of each country.</p>			

¹⁷ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2013) Special protection Areas. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-162>.

<p>Conservation (SACs)</p>	<p>Candidate SACs (cSACs) are sites that have been submitted to the European Commission, but not yet formally adopted. SACs / SCIs / cSACs cover marine as well as terrestrial areas¹⁸.</p> <p>SACs are of national and international conservation importance.</p> <p>Areas can also be secured as sites compensating for damage to a European site (e.g. SACs), and are protected by government policy.</p> <p>The locations of SACs are shown in Figures 2A and 2B</p>			
	<p>As of October 2024, there were 242 SACs, covering an area of 1,068,485 ha. There are three SACs crossing the England / Scotland border (112,894 ha) and seven across the England / Wales border (95,182 ha). Additionally, there are three SACs which are classified as England / Offshore (3,797,160 ha) and one classified as England / Wales / Offshore (584,210 ha)¹⁹. SACs are widely distributed throughout</p>	<p>As of October 2024, there were 238 SACs and one SCI in Scotland, covering an area of 2,291,069 ha. There are three SACs crossing the England / Scotland border (112,894 ha). Additionally, there is one SCI which is classified in Scotland. Also, there are two SACs classified as Scotland / Offshore (182, ha). SACs in Scotland are widely and densely distributed throughout the country. Large concentrations are found in</p>	<p>As of October 2019, there were 85 SACs in Wales, covering an area of 590,353 ha. There are seven across the England / Wales border (95,182 ha), one classified as England / Wales / Offshore (584,210 ha) and one classified as Wales / Offshore (1,062,242 ha). SACs are widely distributed throughout Wales. There are also currently 12 SACs with marine components</p>	<p>As of October 2019, there were 57 SACs in Northern Ireland, covering an area of 85,870 ha. There is also one SAC classified as Northern Ireland / Offshore (160,404 ha). SACs are widely distributed throughout Northern Ireland, with the largest being situated around the coast and border with the Republic of Ireland.</p>

¹⁸ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2016) Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-23>.

¹⁹ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2016) Special Areas of Conservation/Sites of Community Importance in the UK as at 15 September 2016. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1456>.

	<p>England; however, the highest concentrations correspond with the more remote rural and upland locations. There are also currently 37 SACs with marine components designated partly or wholly within English waters. A further 3 SACs with marine components are located within both English and Welsh waters.</p> <p>There is one cSAC located within the UK Offshore Waters²⁰.</p>	<p>coastal and highland areas.</p>	<p>designated partly or wholly within Welsh waters</p>	
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>Member States of the European Union are required to report every six years on the conservation status of habitats and species listed on the annexes of the Habitats Directive. In general, the status of UK habitats of European importance declined over the reporting period 2007 – 2013 and were identified to have improved in the most recent assessment (2019). In 2007, 5% of UK habitats listed in Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive were in favourable conservation status, this figure decreased to 3% in 2013 before increasing again to 8% in 2019. The conservation status of 48% of the habitats was unfavourable-improving in 2007, it decreased to 31% in 2013 and 20% in 2019.</p>			

²⁰ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2024) *Special Areas of Conservation*. Available: [Special Areas of Conservation | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

	The conservation status of 30% of the habitats was unfavourable-declining in 2007, this decreased to 25% in 2013 and 23% in 2019 ²¹ .			
Biodiversity and Ecosystems: Ramsar Sites	Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. In the UK, the first Ramsar sites were designated in 1976. The initial emphasis was on selecting sites of importance to waterbirds within the UK, and consequently many Ramsar sites are also Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the Birds Directive ²² . Ramsar sites are of national and international conservation importance. There are also ‘potential Ramsar sites’ which are site boundaries not yet classified as Ramsar sites. The locations of Ramsar sites are shown in Figures 2A and 2B			
	As of January 2022, there were 74 Ramsar sites in England, totalling an area of approximately 410,746 ha. There are three sites crossing the England / Wales border (40,553 ha total) and one site crossing the England / Scotland border (43,637 ha). Ramsar sites in England are predominantly located in coastal and estuarine areas, however there are smaller sites distributed	As of October 2024, there were 51 Ramsar sites in Scotland, totalling an area of approximately 313,000 ha. There is one site crossing the England / Scotland border (43,637 ha). Ramsar sites in Scotland are primarily located in coastal and estuarine areas, with various lochs being designated, particularly in	As of November 2022, there were 10 Ramsar sites in Wales, totalling an area of 11,366 ha. There were three sites crossing the England / Wales border, totalling 40,553 ha. Ramsar are located in coastal and estuarine areas of Wales, with several situated in the central and northern highlands.	As of January 2022, there were 20 Ramsar sites in Northern Ireland, totalling an area of 88,152 ha. Ramsar sites in Northern Ireland are primarily located in coastal and estuarine areas. There are also two proposed Ramsar sites as of 2025 within Northern Ireland called Derryleckagh and Teal Lough, covering

²¹ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2013) C3. Status of European habitats and species. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4239>

²² Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2015) Ramsar sites in the UK, its Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-161>

	inland throughout the country.	the far north off the country.		an area of approximately 240 ha ²³ .
	<i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i>			
Biodiversity and Ecosystems: National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	<p>NNRs contain examples of some of the most important natural and semi-natural terrestrial and coastal ecosystems in the UK. They are managed to conserve their habitats or to provide special opportunities for scientific study of the habitats communities and species represented within them. In addition, they may be managed to provide public recreation that is compatible with their natural heritage interests.</p> <p>NNRs are declared by the statutory country conservation agencies under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. In Northern Ireland, Nature Reserves are designated under the Amenities Lands Act (Northern Ireland) 1965. In Scotland, whilst SNH remains the statutory designating authority, decisions to declare new NNR are shared with a Partnership Group of interested organisations²⁴.</p> <p>NNRs are of national conservation importance.</p> <p>The locations of NNRs are shown in Figures 2A and 2B.</p> <p>Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal local authorities. Parish and Town Councils can also declare LNRs, but they must have the powers to do so delegated to them by a principal local authority. LNRs are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. They range from windswept coastal headlands, ancient woodlands and flower-rich meadows to former inner-city railways, long abandoned landfill sites and industrial areas now re-colonised by wildlife.</p>			

²³ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2025) Ramsar Sites in the UK, the Crown Dependencies & UK Overseas Territories. Available: <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/ramsar-sites/#crown-dependencies-uk-overseas-territories-potential-sites>

²⁴ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2014) Protected areas designations directory. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1527>.

	<p>As of May 2024, there are 221 NNRs in England, totalling an area over 110,000 ha. The largest is The Wash covering almost 8,800 hectares, while Dorset's Horn Park Quarry is the smallest at 0.32 ha²⁵. NNRs are widely distributed throughout England.</p> <p>As of November 2024, there are 1,704 LNRs in England²⁶.</p>	<p>As of December 2024, there are 43 NNRs in Scotland, covering just under 2% of Scotland's land area²⁷. NNRs within Scotland cover a wide variety of Scotland's habitats and species from pine forest to blanket bog, from seabird colonies to mountain plants. NNRs are distributed throughout Scotland, with larger concentrations within the north of the country.</p> <p>There are 96 LNRs in Scotland, usually close to towns and cities. The most recent LNR designations were in December 2023 when Glasgow City Council declared 5 new sites²⁸</p>	<p>As of June 2023, there are 76 NNRs in Wales. These cover a wide range of habitats from high mountains, peat bogs and woodlands, to sand dunes, mud flats and remote off-shore islands²⁹.</p> <p>There are approximately 100 LNRs in Wales, designated by the Countryside Council for Wales³⁰.</p>	<p>There are 12 NNRs in Northern Ireland, totalling an area of 1,800 ha, noting this list was last updated November 2016. These are concentrated in the east and north east of the country. They contain a wide range of species, communities and geology³¹.</p> <p>There are 38 Nature Reserves in Northern Ireland cover 3,300 ha.</p>
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²⁵ Natural England (2021) *National Nature Reserves in England*. Available: [National Nature Reserves in England - GOV.UK](#)

²⁶ Natural England (2024) *Local Nature Reserves (England)*. Available: [Local Nature Reserves \(England\) | Natural England Open Data Geoportal](#)

²⁷ NatureScot (2021) *National Nature Reserves*. Available: [National Nature Reserves | NatureScot](#)

²⁸ NatureScot (2024) *Local Nature Reserves*. Available: [Local Nature Reserves | NatureScot](#)

²⁹ Natural Resources Wales (2023) *National Nature Reserves*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / National Nature Reserves](#)

³⁰ Natural Resources Wales (2024) *Local Green Spaces*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / Local green spaces](#)

³¹ OpenDataNI (2016) *National Nature Reserves and Nature Reserves*. Available: [Portal | National Nature Reserves](#)

	<i>Supporting trend data is not available</i>			
Biodiversity and Ecosystems Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (England, Scotland and Wales) and Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) (Northern Ireland) NB: The SSSI / ASSI	<p>The SSSI / ASSI series has developed since 1949 as the suite of sites providing statutory protection for the best examples of the UK's flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features. SSSIs were originally notified under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, and then were re-notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Improved provisions for the protection and management of SSSIs were introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (in England and Wales) and (in Scotland) by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2010. ASSIs are notified under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) 1985. Measures to improve ASSI protection and management are contained in the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002³².</p> <p>SSSIs / ASSIs are of national conservation importance.</p> <p>The locations of SSSIs are shown in Figures 2A and 2B.</p>			
	As of November 2024, there are 4,118 SSSIs in England, covering about 7% of the country's surface area ³³ . Some of these sites correspond with other designations, such as SACs, SPAs and NNRs.	As of November 2023, there were 1,422 SSSIs in Scotland covering about 13% of the country's surface area ³⁴ . Some of these sites correspond with other designations, such as SACs, SPAs and NNRs.	As of June 2023 there are more than 1,000 SSSIs in Wales, covering about 12% of the country's surface area ³⁵ . Some of these sites correspond with other designations, such as SACs, SPAs and NNRs.	As of October 2016 there are 394 ASSIs in Northern Ireland ³⁶ . ASSIs are widespread throughout the whole of Northern Ireland and cover a wide variety of

³² Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2024) *Protected areas designations directory*. Available: [UK Protected Areas | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

³³ Natural England (2024) *Sites of Special Scientific Interest*. Available: [Sites of Special Scientific Interest \(England\) | Natural England Open Data Geoportal](#)

³⁴ NatureScot (2024) *Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)*. Available: <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/protected-areas/national-designations/sites-special-scientific-interest-sssis>

³⁵ Natural Resources Wales (2023) *Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / Types of protected areas of land and sea](#)

³⁶ OpenDataNI (2016) *Areas of Special Scientific Interest*. Available: [Portal | Areas of Special Scientific Interest](#)

information shown includes sites designated for both biological and geological reasons.	SSSIs are widespread throughout the whole of England and cover a wide variety of habitats and geological features.	SSSIs are widespread throughout the whole of Scotland and cover a wide variety of habitats and geological features.	SSSIs are widespread throughout the whole of Wales and cover a wide variety of habitats and geological features (NRW 2016).	habitats and geological features.
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>The last assessment of the status of SSSIs and ASSIs was undertaken in 2005. This indicated that between 1999 and 2005, less than 50% of the biological features monitored in SSSIs and ASSIs were in favourable condition³⁷.</p>			
<p>Biodiversity and Ecosystems:</p> <p>Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)</p>	<p>MCZs are established to protect nationally important marine wildlife, habitats, geology and geomorphology and can be designated anywhere in English, Welsh and Northern Irish inshore and UK offshore waters³⁸. They are established under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009). In Northern Ireland, MCZs are designated under the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) (2013)³⁹.</p> <p>It is also noted that the Welsh Government, with support from NRW and the Joint Nature Conservation Company (JNCC), are currently working with a task and finish group of marine stakeholders to identify possible Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) within Welsh waters.⁴⁰</p> <p>MCZs are of national conservation importance.</p> <p>The locations of MCZs are shown in Figures 2A and 2B.</p>			

³⁷ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010) *Common Standards Monitoring for Designated Sites: First Six Year Report*. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-3520#download>

³⁸ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2014) *Protected areas designations directory*. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1527>.

³⁹ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2019) *Marine Conservation Zones*. Available: [Marine Conservation Zones | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1527)

⁴⁰ JNCC (2022) *Welsh MPA Network Completion project launched*. Available: [Welsh MPA network project | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1527)

	As of May 2019, there are 91 MCZs within English waters. These are located in coastal and offshore locations and are designated for a range of habitats, wildlife conservation and geological features ⁴¹ .	This designation is not applicable to Scotland.	There is one MCZ in Welsh water, Skomer, covering 130.2 ha. Skomer MCZ is situated around the island of Skomer and the Marloes Peninsula in Pembrokeshire, south west Wales. Skomer MCZ has species and habitats of national and international importance. These include grey seal, pink seafan, sponge communities, eelgrass and algal communities ⁴² .	As of January 2024, there are five MCZs in Northern Irish waters ⁴³ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strangford Lough • Carlingford Lough (NB this area is adjacent to the border with the Republic of Ireland) • Outer Belfast Lough • Waterfoot • Rathlin
	<i>Supporting trend data is not available</i>			
Biodiversity and Ecosystems: Nature Conservation Marine Protected	<p>NCMPAs are designated by Scottish Natural Heritage through the Marine (Scotland) Act (2010) and the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009). NCMPAs are protected to reinforce the existing network of designated sites (SPAs, SACs, Ramsar) and introduce spatial protection for a wider range of marine wildlife, habitats and geology, previously not represented in the network.</p> <p>NCMPAs are of national conservation importance.</p> <p>Additionally, Priority Marine Features have been developed by Marine Scotland, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). These are habitats and species that are a priority for</p>			

⁴¹ UK Government (2019) *Marine Conservation Zone designations in England*. Available: [Marine conservation zone designations in England - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zone-designations-in-england)

⁴² Natural Resources Wales (2021) *Skomer Marine Conservation Zone*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / Skomer Marine Conservation Zone](https://www.naturalresources.wales/skomer-marine-conservation-zone)

⁴³ DAERA (2024) *Marine Conservation Zones*. Available: [Marine Conservation Zones | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](https://www.daera.gov.uk/marine-conservation-zones)

Areas (NCMPAs)	conservation in Scotland's seas. Many of these are protected through the existing network of Marine Protected Areas. ⁴⁴			
	This designation is not applicable to England	There are 36 NCMPAs in Scottish waters, 13 of which are offshore. They cover approximately 10% of the Scottish seas. These are primarily designated to protect marine habitats and species ⁴⁵ .	This designation is not applicable to Wales.	This designation is not applicable to Northern Ireland.
	<i>Supporting trend data is not available</i>			
Biodiversity and Ecosystems: Ancient Woodland	<p>Ancient Woodland is land that has had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600AD (England and Wales) and 1750AD (Scotland) and is identified within the Ancient Woodland Inventory. As Ancient Woodlands have developed over such long timescales, they have unique features such as relatively undisturbed soils and communities of plants and animals that depend on the stable conditions that Ancient Woodland provides. These are often rare and vulnerable species.</p> <p>There are two types of Ancient Woodland classification in England, Wales and Scotland; Ancient semi-natural woods and plantations on Ancient Woodland sites. Ancient semi-natural woods are woods that have developed naturally and may have existed since woodland first colonised the UK after the last glaciation. Plantations on Ancient Woodland sites are ancient woods that were felled and planted with non-native trees⁴⁶.</p>			

⁴⁴ Scottish Government (2025) *Marine environment*. Available: [Priority Marine Features - Marine environment - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/priorities/marine-environment/)

⁴⁵ JNCC (2019) *Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas*. Available: [Nature Conservation MPAs | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](https://www.jncc.gov.uk/nature-conservation/mpas/)

⁴⁶ Woodland Trust (2008) *KEY for classification of woods on the inventory and definitions of different antiquity classifications*. Available: <http://www.backonthemap.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/7F3F67AD-5A28-4897-A039-3FC97841B6D5/0/080612Updateddecisionkeyforwebsiteandreport.pdf>

	<p>In Northern Ireland, four classifications of Ancient Woodland exist: Ancient Woodland; Probably Ancient Woodland; Possibly Ancient Woodland, and; Long Established Woodland⁴⁷.</p> <p>Ancient Woodland is irreplaceable and is of national conservation importance; however it does not have statutory protection in its own right.</p> <p>The location of Ancient Woodland sites are shown in Figures 2A and 2B.</p>			
	As of June 2024 there are over 52,000 ancient woodland sites in England ⁴⁸ . Ancient Woodland sites are scattered throughout England, with the densest concentrations being in the south east.	Native woodlands occur in most of mainland Scotland and on several islands. As of May 2022 there are around 352,000 ha of ancient woods in Scotland ⁴⁹ .	There are around 95,000ha of Ancient Woodland in Wales as of June 2024 ⁵⁰	The Inventory of Ancient and Long-Established Woodland identifies 2,374 sites, totalling 9,964ha in Northern Ireland. Of this, only 151ha is classified as Ancient Woodland (present since 1600AD) with 5,662ha classified as Long-Established Woodland, 3,269ha as Possibly Ancient Woodland, 882ha of Probably Ancient Woodland.
	Supporting Trend Data:			

⁴⁷ Woodland Trust (2016) *Ancient Woodland*. Available: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/trees-woods-and-wildlife/woodland-habitats/ancient-woodland/>

⁴⁸ UK Government Data (2024) *Ancient Woodland (England)*. Available: [Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK](#)

⁴⁹ NatureScot (2022) *Ancient Woodland Inventory*. Available: [ancient woodland inventory scotland - Search](#)

⁵⁰ DataMapWales (2024) *Ancient Woodland Inventory 2021*. Available: [Ancient Woodland Inventory 2021 | DataMapWales](#)

	<p>Within Northern Ireland, 1,500ha of classifiable woodland was lost from 1960 – 2007, although only 16ha of this can be stated to be truly Ancient Woodland (present since 1600AD)⁵¹. Trends are less clear within the rest of the UK, however the preservation of Ancient Woodland is increasing recognised within planning policy.</p>
<p>Biodiversity and Ecosystems</p> <p>Priority Habitat</p>	<p>Priority Habitat is habitat listed as being of principal importance for the purpose of conserving or enhancing biodiversity. In each of the four countries different lists have been produced in line with relevant legislation.</p> <p>In England, the Priority Habitat Inventory (PHI) is a spatial dataset that maps priority habitats identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). The PHI currently maps 27 terrestrial and freshwater priority habitats across England⁵².</p> <p>In Scotland, priority habitats are listed in the Scottish Biodiversity list, including information on the selection criteria met and habitats identified in Annex 1 of the “Habitats Directive” which occur in Scotland⁵³.</p> <p>In Wales, priority habitats are listed in section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016⁵⁴. The Welsh Ministers publish, review and revise lists of living organisms and types of habitat in Wales, which they consider are of key significance to sustain and improve biodiversity in relation to Wales.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, as part of the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy, the Department maintains lists of Northern Ireland Priority Habitats which require conservation action. These are now maintained as part of the WANE Act. The list of Northern Ireland Priority Species is currently under review⁵⁵.</p>

⁵¹ Woodland Trust (2007) *Preliminary Report*. Available: <http://www.backonthemap.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/09F70BD6-8E68-4328-90B7-05DFE9483550/0/070115Preliminaryreport.pdf>

⁵² DEFRA (2022) Habitats and species of principal importance in England. Available: <https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity>

⁵³ NatureScot (2022) Scottish Biodiversity List. Available: <https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity>

⁵⁴ Wales Biodiversity Partnership (2025) Section 7 - Biodiversity lists and duty to take steps to maintain and enhance biodiversity. Available: <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Section-7>

⁵⁵ DAERA (2025) Habitat and Species Action Plans. Available: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/habitat-and-species-actions-plans>

	<p>In England, there are 1.86 million hectares of terrestrial and coastal priority habitats as of 2023. These habitats represent around 14% of the total land area of the country. For the 27 main habitat types, deciduous woodland accounts for around 41% of the total priority habitats resource in England. Blanket bog and upland heath each account for around 13%, while coastal and floodplain grazing marsh make up around 12%. Rarer habitats, such as traditional orchards, ponds, and limestone pavements, together constitute 1% of the total resource⁵⁶.</p>	<p>In Scotland, there are 41 terrestrial habitats, and 20 marine habitats listed on the Scottish Biodiversity list.</p>	<p>In Wales, there are 16 main terrestrial habitats split into 36 terrestrial priority habitats, and 4 main marine habitats split into 19 marine priority habitats.</p>	<p>In Northern Ireland, there are 22 priority habitats listed⁵⁷.</p>
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>Priority habitats can be designated as protected areas called Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). They can also be outside of these SSSI protected areas but be under Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) or Countryside</p>			

⁵⁶ DEFRA (2025) Extent and condition of priority habitats. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics>

⁵⁷ DAERA (2025) Natural Environment Map Viewer. Available: <https://gis.daera-ni.gov.uk/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=bb721449cb8949e7a4f90c722bd2d80b>

	<p>Stewardship (CS) agreements or fall within Forestry Commission (FC) ‘Managed woodland’. Some priority habitats, however, fall outside of the protection of all these schemes.</p> <p>The ‘Living England Map’ shows the extent and distribution of 16 different habitats across England for 2022-23. The bespoke habitat types mapped are aligned with the UK Biodiversity Action Plan’s broad habitat classification scheme⁵⁸.</p>			
<p>Biodiversity and Ecosystems</p> <p>Biosphere Reserves</p>	<p>Biosphere Reserves are areas of terrestrial and coastal ecosystems promoting the conservation of biodiversity with sustainable use. Biosphere reserves serve to demonstrate integrated management of land, water and biodiversity. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme comprises a World Network of Biosphere Reserves⁵⁹.</p> <p>Biosphere Reserves are comprised of three interrelated zones:</p> <p>1) The Core Area (protected: the ‘natural’ state of the region’s ecosystems).</p> <p>2) The Buffer Zone (conserves the core area, and can accommodate positive human engagement, including research, education, training, tourism, extensive agriculture, or sustainable forestry).</p> <p>3) The Transition Area (where most of the region’s people live and work, using the natural resources in a sustainable manner).</p> <p>Biosphere Reserves are non-statutory.</p> <p>The locations of Biosphere Reserves are shown in Figure 2A.</p>			
	There are four Biosphere Reserves in England.	There are two Biosphere Reserves in Scotland.	There is one Biosphere Reserve in Wales, Biosffer Dyfi.	There are no Biosphere Reserves in Northern Ireland.

⁵⁸ DEFRA (2024) Living England: a national habitat map for everyone. Available: <https://defraenvironment.blog.gov.uk/2024/>

⁵⁹ UNESCO (2017) Biosphere Reserves. Available: <http://www.unesco.org.uk/designation/biosphere-reserves/>

	<p>Brighton and Lewes Downs:</p> <p>The Brighton and Lewes Downs Biosphere reserve covers almost 400km² of land and sea between the River Adur and the River Ouse, bringing together the three environments of countryside, coast, and city & towns under one united approach.</p> <p>Brighton and Lewes Downs Biosphere 2017⁶⁰</p> <p>North Devon:</p> <p>The North Devon Biosphere Reserve covers 3,300km² of land and sea. The reserve extends from the catchments of the Rivers Taw and Torridge and out to the island of Lundy, with its core at</p>	<p>Galloway and Southern Ayrshire:</p> <p>Covering almost 9,800km² the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere was granted its status in recognition of the special natural qualities that characterise the area. It is home to 95,000 people who work together to improve life whilst caring for the natural environment.⁶⁴</p> <p>Wester Ross:</p> <p>The newly designated area of Wester Ross extends from the tip of Knoydart northwards to Achiltibuie and the Summer Isles, including population centres in Kyle of Lochalsh, Lochcarron, Gairloch and Ullapool. The new designation replaces</p>	<p>The area around the river Dyfi (west Wales) is a special place for its people, its culture and the local environment. It hosts some of the finest and most inspiring landscapes and wildlife areas in Europe, as well as a passionate community that care strongly about their magnificent surroundings⁶⁶.</p>	
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⁶⁰ Brighton and Lewes Downs Biosphere (2017) Available: <http://biospherehere.org.uk/>

⁶⁴ Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere (2022) Available: [Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere](#)

⁶⁶ Biosffer Dyfie Biosphere (2024) Available: [UNESCO Dyfi Biosphere Reserve Wales](#)

	<p>Braunton Burrows sand dune system⁶¹.</p> <p>Isle of Wright</p> <p>It covers all 33 parishes on land, and stretches north across the Solent to the shores of the mainland and south into the Channel⁶²</p> <p>Isle of Man</p> <p>Covers the whole island, with a population of approximately 84,000 people and 572km2 of area. The biosphere delivers it's work under it's vision and strategy 'Working Together for a Sustainable future'. ⁶³</p>	<p>an earlier one for Beinn Eighe – a much smaller area that was managed solely for nature conservation, research and education⁶⁵.</p>		
<p><i>Supporting trend data not available.</i></p>				

⁶¹ North Devon Biosphere (2016). Available: [Home](#)

⁶² Isle of Wright Biosphere (2024) Available: [Isle of Man Government - UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man](#)

⁶³ UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man (2024) *Isle of Man*. Available: [The Isle of Man - Biosphere](#)

⁶⁵ Wester Ross Biosphere (2024) Available: [About | Wester Ross Biosphere](#)

<p>Biodiversity and Ecosystems</p> <p>Biodiversity</p>	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>Between 1970 and 2018, populations of breeding farmland and woodland birds decreased by 45% and 29% respectively, and the population index for breeding water and wetland birds was 17% lower than in 1975⁶⁷. The population of breeding seabirds is also in long-term decline, being 28% lower in 2018 than in 1986⁶⁸. Between 1970 and 2018, 63% of UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Species had declined, with only 21% increasing⁶⁹.</p> <p>Long-term data on habitats is not available, however in 2007, 5% of UK habitats listed on Annex I of the Habitats Directive were in favourable conservation status, decreasing to 3% in 2013, before increasing again to 8% in 2019. The number of habitats classified as unfavourable improving decreased to 31% in 2013 and 20% in 2019 from 48% in 2007⁷⁰. Improvement was seen in the number of habitats assessed as unfavourable declining, with a 7% decrease between 2007 and 2019. 48% of UK habitats of European importance are assessed as being unfavourable stable⁷¹.</p> <p>Some aspects do show improvement. The area of land in higher-level or targeted agri-environment schemes was 3.5 million hectares in 2019, an increase of 3.2 million hectares since 1992⁷². There has also been improvements in the number of fish stocks being sustainable harvested, forestry land being sustainably managed and reductions in marine and air pollution⁷³.</p>
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⁶⁷ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2020) C5. Birds of the wider countryside and at sea. Available at: [UKBI - C5. Birds of the wider countryside and at sea | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

⁶⁸ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2020) C5. Birds of the wider countryside and at sea. Available at: [UKBI - C5. Birds of the wider countryside and at sea | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

⁶⁹ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2020) C4. Status of UK priority species. Available: [UKBI - C4a. Species - abundance | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

⁷⁰ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2020). *Status of UK habitats of European Importance*. Available at: [UKBI - C3a. European habitats | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

⁷¹ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2020). *Status of UK habitats of European Importance*. Available at: [UKBI - C3a. European habitats | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

⁷² Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2020) B1a. Area of land in agri-environment schemes. Available at: [UKBI - B1a. Agri-environment schemes | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

⁷³ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2016) *Overview of assessment of change for all indicators*. Over. Available at: [UKBI - Overview of trends 2023 | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

	<p>Increasingly, biodiversity is under pressure from development and increasing population, in addition to climate change. Overall climate change could lead to:</p> <p>Changes in phenology (including changes in the timings of seasonal events causing loss of synchronicity and increased competitive advantage for some species at the expense of others);</p> <p>Shifts in suitable climate conditions for individual species leading to change in species distribution, abundance and range;</p> <p>Changes in the community structure and ecosystem function of habitats which species occupy;</p> <p>Changes to the composition and structure of plant and animal communities (including arrival of non-natives, loss of native species and increase in pest species);</p> <p>Changes to habitats and ecosystems, such as altered water regimes, increased rates of decomposition in bogs and higher growth rates in forests; and</p> <p>Loss of physical space due to sea level rise and increased storminess⁷⁴.</p> <p>It is also worth noting that opportunities exist to deal with challenges and risks to natural resources. For example the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR)⁷⁵ for Wales has identified the following, which are also considered to be applicable to the rest of the United Kingdom</p>
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⁷⁴ Inter-Agency Climate Change Forum (2010). *Biodiversity and Climate Change – a summary of impacts in the UK*. Available at: [Biodiversity and Climate Change - a summary of impacts in the UK](#)

⁷⁵ Natural Resources Wales (2016) *The State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR): Assessment of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources. Technical Report. Chapter 3*. Available at: [chapter-3-state-and-trends-final-for-publication.pdf](#)

	<table><tr><th></th><th>Declining natural resources</th><th>Resilience of ecosystems</th><th>Optimising benefits</th><th>Minimising negative impacts</th></tr><tr><td>Green infrastructure in and around urban areas</td><td></td><td>Contribute to connectivity within and between ecosystems</td><td>Multi-benefits of urban green-spaces such as water filtration, accessible places for health and recreation, connecting habitats, and supporting opportunities for community cohesion</td><td>Tackling health inequalities and air quality</td></tr><tr><td>Increasing woodland cover, and bringing more of our existing woodlands into appropriate management</td><td>Will address woodland resource</td><td>Contribute to diversity and connectivity of woodlands</td><td>Multiple benefits of woodland, including health and recreation benefits, fibre and fuel, and wider catchment management opportunities</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Coastal zone management and managed realignment</td><td>Addressing coastal squeeze</td><td>Supporting coastal habitat</td><td>Supporting coastal communities, for example through providing opportunities for tourism and employment</td><td>Future proofing from coastal flooding / sea level rises</td></tr><tr><td>Maintaining, enhancing and restoring floodplains and hydrological systems</td><td>Water availability</td><td>Capacity of catchments to deal with high and low flows; supporting water quality</td><td>Supporting recreation and economic activity</td><td>Flood risk Social cohesion, equity/local economy</td></tr><tr><td>Better soil management</td><td>Investment in soils for future productivity</td><td>Soils underpin everything</td><td>Preventing erosion, supporting other habitats and benefits</td><td>Erosion, costs of water treatment etc</td></tr><tr><td>Utilisation of our uplands to deliver multiple benefits</td><td>Restoring peatland, safeguarding carbon stores</td><td>Wider resilience of upland and lowland habitats and species that depend on them</td><td>Making better use of Wales natural assets</td><td>Tackling climate change; reducing flood risk</td></tr></table>		Declining natural resources	Resilience of ecosystems	Optimising benefits	Minimising negative impacts	Green infrastructure in and around urban areas		Contribute to connectivity within and between ecosystems	Multi-benefits of urban green-spaces such as water filtration, accessible places for health and recreation, connecting habitats, and supporting opportunities for community cohesion	Tackling health inequalities and air quality	Increasing woodland cover, and bringing more of our existing woodlands into appropriate management	Will address woodland resource	Contribute to diversity and connectivity of woodlands	Multiple benefits of woodland, including health and recreation benefits, fibre and fuel, and wider catchment management opportunities		Coastal zone management and managed realignment	Addressing coastal squeeze	Supporting coastal habitat	Supporting coastal communities, for example through providing opportunities for tourism and employment	Future proofing from coastal flooding / sea level rises	Maintaining, enhancing and restoring floodplains and hydrological systems	Water availability	Capacity of catchments to deal with high and low flows; supporting water quality	Supporting recreation and economic activity	Flood risk Social cohesion, equity/local economy	Better soil management	Investment in soils for future productivity	Soils underpin everything	Preventing erosion, supporting other habitats and benefits	Erosion, costs of water treatment etc	Utilisation of our uplands to deliver multiple benefits	Restoring peatland, safeguarding carbon stores	Wider resilience of upland and lowland habitats and species that depend on them	Making better use of Wales natural assets	Tackling climate change; reducing flood risk
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Biodiversity and Ecosystems	Significant damage has occurred to shallow sediment habitats and reefs as a result of bottom fishing practices especially beam trawling ⁷⁶ . While some recovery in sensitive fish species abundance is noted for the Celtic Sea, when considering the Greater North Sea, evidence for population recovery is unclear (OSPAR 201788). Around the UK, coastal and																																			

⁷⁶ OSPAR (2010) *Quality Status Report: Damage to seabed habitats*. Available: [QSR 2010 - Regional Summaries - Region II – Greater North Sea](#)

Damage to seabed habitats	offshore seabed sediment habitats such as sands and muds are impacted by a range of activities, however the spatial extent of damage generated by bottom trawling activity, which may damage ecosystem functioning, is considered to be the main source of pressure on benthic environments with an appropriate indicator developed for the updated assessment of GES (Defra 2019).
Biodiversity and Ecosystems Birds	<p>Along the eastern coast of the UK, some seabirds have continued to decline in numbers, and experience poor or failed breeding, possibly due to the combined effects of climate change and fishing on key species (e.g. sandeels). Fish discards from trawling may have contributed to elevated population sizes in some species. However, the implementation of the discard ban⁷⁷, phased in from 2015-2019 across the majority of EU fisheries, is expected to impact those seabird species that exploit this resource, e.g. herring gull, lesser black-backed gull, great black-backed gull, great skua, northern gannet, northern fulmar and black-legged kittiwake (JNCC 2020). While the wider seabird population trends for 2000-2018 still show an increase for some species, e.g. northern gannet, black-headed gull and razorbill, there is still a general decline in several recorded species, most notably Arctic skua, black-legged kittiwake, northern fulmar, little tern and European shag. In some cases, this decline may be slowing and populations may be stabilising, albeit at numbers lower than that seen from the last census; the publication of final results from the Seabirds Count census (2015-2021) will provide a clearer understanding of seabird populations around the UK and Ireland.</p> <p>Declines in seabird breeding numbers have also been observed to the west of Scotland associated with predation by introduced mammals and food supply shortages, the latter of which may be due in part to climate change, although eradication programmes of introduced predators on some islands is providing respite for seabirds vulnerable to predation.</p> <p>While insufficient data makes it difficult to produce population trends for some species from Northern Ireland, a pattern of decline for some species e.g. northern fulmar, is evident, with (severe) weather, predation and food shortages cited as reasons for poor breeding or breeding failures. However, relative to overall UK trends, populations of some species, notably blacklegged kittiwake, are stable (BTO 2020).</p>

⁷⁷ UK Government (2015) *Fisheries discard ban starts*. Available: [Fisheries discard ban starts - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fisheries-discard-ban-starts)

	Populations of some waterbird species continue to decline, with numbers reduced at principal sites (those supporting more than 75,000 birds) on both the east and west coasts of the UK. Climate change is thought to be one of the biggest drivers of broad scale changes in wintering numbers and distributions; milder weather around the Baltic is likely shortening time many species spend in the UK, low numbers and poorer breeding success could be the result of adverse weather at breeding locations in Russia, while climate change is also thought to be leading to short-stopping in migration journeys of some species (e.g. European white fronted goose and goldeneye) and influencing colonisation by egrets. At a site-specific level, pressures such as coastal human disturbance and development at estuaries can affect numbers (Frost et al. 2020).
Biodiversity and Ecosystems Fish stocks	The latest updated assessment towards achieving good environmental status ⁷⁸ reported that demersal fish communities were recovering from over-exploitation in the past, but GES had not yet been achieved in either the Greater North Sea or the Celtic Seas, nor would be achieved for all fish communities by 2020. A partial assessment of pelagic shelf fish did not provide a clear result. ICES advise that several North Sea stocks are harvested unsustainably (e.g. cod, whiting, haddock, mackerel, and blue whiting). However, in both regions, recent trends in the number of sensitive species increasing in abundance suggest an improving situation and further decline in the population abundance of sensitive fish species has been halted (see also OSPAR Intermediate Assessment ⁷⁹).
Biodiversity and Ecosystems Nature Recovery Network	<p>The NRN will be a national network of wildlife-rich places. The NRN is a major commitment in the government's 25 Year Environment Plan and part of the forthcoming Nature Strategy.</p> <p>Establishing the NRN will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance sites designated for nature conservation and other wildlife-rich places - newly created and restored wildlife-rich habitats, corridors and stepping stones will help wildlife populations to grow and move • improve the landscape's resilience to climate change, providing natural solutions to reduce carbon and manage flood risk, and sustaining vital ecosystems such as improved soil, clean water and clean air • reinforce the natural and cultural diversity of our landscapes, and protect our historic natural environment

⁷⁸ Defra (2019) *UK Updated Assessment and Good Environmental Status*. Available: [Marine Strategy Part One: UK Updated Assessment and Good Environmental Status - Defra - Citizen Space](#)

⁷⁹ OSPAR (2017) *Recovery in the Population Abundance of Sensitive Fish Species*. Available: [Recovery in the Population Abundance of Sensitive Fish Species](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable us to enjoy and connect with nature where we live, work and play - benefiting our health and wellbeing <p>The aim is to use maps and data to identify priorities for nature’s recovery. Locally developed strategies, LNRS, will be introduced to help plan, prioritise and target action and investment in nature at a regional level across England. These Recovery Strategies will include a map of existing areas important for nature and identify areas the opportunity areas for nature.</p> <p>As described below the legislative and mapped picture remains incomplete across the UK, however progress is evident across a number of areas. See the Wildlife Trusts⁸⁰, the West of England Nature Partnership⁸¹ the Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants⁸² and Wild Oxfordshire⁸³ as examples of draft and published outputs that begin to take shape.</p>			
	<p>England</p> <p>The Westminster Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan (2018)⁸⁴, and its Environment Bill, both promote and support the development of a Nature Recovery Network for England, and there will be a legal requirement to</p>	<p>Scotland</p> <p>RSPB Scotland, the Scottish Wildlife Trust and WWF Scotland launched in 2020 the Nature Recovery Plan which sets out 11 transformative actions for nature’s recovery in Scotland⁸⁵. This includes linking up wild places by</p>	<p>Wales</p> <p>The Welsh Government’s Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales⁸⁶ has as one of its five themes, “Maintaining and Enhancing Resilient Ecological Networks”. The plan identifies a broad range of initiatives, including mapping</p>	<p>Northern Ireland</p> <p>Official government policy to underpin a Nature Recovery Network is not yet in place. Ulster Wildlife Trust is working to build capacity to deliver a Nature Recovery Network, however⁸⁷.</p>

⁸⁰ The Wildlife Trusts (2024) *Space for nature*. Available: [Space for nature | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

⁸¹ West of England Nature Partnership (2024) *WENP Board*. Available at: [Who we are](#)

⁸² Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs & Northants (2024) *Nature Recovery Network Mapping*. Available: [Nature Recovery Network Maps | Wildlife Trust for Beds Cambs & Northants](#)

⁸³ Wild Oxfordshire (2022) *Oxfordshire’s Nature Recovery Network*. Available: [Oxfordshire’s Nature Recovery Network](#)

⁸⁴ UK Government (2023) *25 Year Environment Plan*. Available: [25 Year Environment Plan - GOV.UK](#)

⁸⁵ A Nature Recovery Plan (2020) *11 transformative actions for nature in Scotland*. Available: [A-Nature-Recovery-Plan.pdf](#)

⁸⁶ Welsh Government (2015) *Nature recovery action plan*. Available: [Nature recovery action plan | GOV.WALES](#)

⁸⁷ Ulster Wildlife (2024) *Nature Recovery Networks to create a Wilder Future*. Available: [Nature Recovery Networks | Ulster Wildlife](#)

	create Local Nature Recovery Strategies.	delivering a Scottish Nature Network.	opportunities for the restoration of habitat.	
Biodiversity and Ecosystems Climate change adaptation risks and opportunities	Supporting Trend Data: Overall scoring of the current risks and opportunities to overall aims and objectives of Natural England ⁸⁸ . This includes the Impact (I) and Likelihood (L) ratings and assessment of medium- and long-term risks using two horizons of 2030 and 2050. To follow CCC advice of assessing risks to 4°C and planning adaptation to 2°C; UKCP18 projections considering RCP 2.6 as a low emissions scenario and RCP8.5 as a high emissions scenario. This overall risk assessment demonstrates the significant impacts we expect in the medium term, on a pathway for stabilising global warming below 2°C by 2100. Our adaptation plan actions outlined in the next section are designed to be the first step to dealing with these risks over the next five years. However, the plan will require regular reappraisal in response to the developing risks and impacts of climate change on our work. Many of these risks are interrelated due to the nature of climate change impacts on the natural environment. Addressing these risks and opportunities in an integrated way is also reflected in our adaptation actions. If international efforts to limit global temperatures rises are not successful and we continue on a pathway to 4°C global warming at the end of century we are likely to experience severe impacts to our aims in both the medium and long term. Adapting to these impacts is beyond the scope of this adaptation plan, which would require more urgent and significant action.			

⁸⁸ Natural England (2021) *Climate Change risk assessment and adaption plan*. Available: [NE761 Edition 1 Natural Englands climate change risk assessment and adaptation plan \(2021\).pdf](#)

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	Risks	Medium term risk		Long term risk	
		RCP 2.6	RCP 8.5	RCP 2.6	RCP8.5
	Risks to the viability of the Nature Recovery Network and the recovery of threatened species and habitats	9 moderate	12 major	16 major	20 severe
		I – moderate	I – major	I - major	I – major
		L– possible	L– possible	L - likely	L – almost certain
	Risks to the status of protected sites for biodiversity and geodiversity	12 major	16 major	16 major	20 severe
		I - moderate	I - major	I - major	I – major
		L - likely	L - likely	L - likely	L – almost certain
	Risks to the ability of the SSSI network, MPAs, NNRs and protected landscapes to adapt to climate change	12 major	16 major	16 major	20 severe
		I - moderate	I - major	I - major	I – major
		L - likely	L - likely	L - likely	L – almost certain

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	Risks to natural capital and its contribution to agriculture, fisheries and sustainable development including farm advice and net gain	12 major I - moderate L - likely	16 major I - major L - likely	16 major I - major L - likely	20 severe I – major L – almost certain
	Risks to the viability of natural areas for people to access and connect with nature	3 minor I - minimal L - possible	6 moderate I - minor L - possible	12 major I - moderate L - likely	16 major I - major L - likely
	Risks and opportunities for Natural England's role as a leader in nature recovery and climate change.	3 minor I - minimal L - possible	6 moderate I - minor L - possible	12 major I - moderate L - likely	16 major I - major L - likely
	Risks and opportunities for different species and habitats under changing climatic conditions.	10 major I – minor L – almost certain	15 major I – moderate L – almost certain	15 major I – moderate L – almost certain	20 severe I – major L – almost certain

Sustainability Topic / Baseline	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
Communities – Population, Employment, and Viability:	The population in the UK is measured through the Census. This provides an estimate of the overall population the UK and its distribution within countries and regions. The last Census was undertaken in 2021. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) also provides mid-year population estimates which provide annual and more recent data ⁸⁹ . The mid-2023 population estimates for the United Kingdom was 68,265,209 ⁹⁰ .			

⁸⁹ Office for National Statistics (2024) *Census 2021*. Available at: [Census - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁹⁰ Office for National Statistics (2024) Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

Population				
	The population of England in mid-2023 was 57,690,323 which accounts for 84.5% of the UK's population ⁹¹ .	The population of Scotland in mid-2023 was 5,490,100 which accounts for 8.0% of the UK's population ⁹² .	The population of Wales in mid-2023 was 3,164,404 which accounts for 4.6% of the UK's population ⁹³ .	The population of Northern Ireland in mid-2023 was 1,920,382 which accounts for 2.8% of the UK's population ⁹⁴ .
<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>The UK population is projected to rise by 2.1 million to 69.2 million over the decade to mid- 2030; this would be a 3.2% increase⁹⁵. By 2066 there is projected to be a further 8.6 million UK residents aged 65 years and over, totalling 20.4 million, making up 26% of the total population.</p> <p>The UK population is increasing but at a slower rate. Decreasing numbers of births and net international migration have resulted in the slowest rate of growth that the UK has seen in 15 years, returning it to the level seen in mid-2004. Despite population growth slowing, 2019 was the 37th consecutive year (since 1982) that the total UK population has increased. UK population continues to grow in mid-2019, but at a slower rate than any year since mid-2004. International migration continues to increase and has increased rapidly since 2020, resulting in an increase to the UK's population⁹⁶.</p>				

⁹¹ Office for National Statistics (2024) *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁹² Office for National Statistics (2024) *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁹³ Office for National Statistics (2024) *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁹⁴ Office for National Statistics (2024) *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁹⁵ Office for National Statistics (2021) *Overview of the UK population: 2020*. Available: [Overview of the UK population - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁹⁶ Statista (2024) *Long term migration figures in the United Kingdom from 1964 to 2024*. Available: [UK long-term migration figures 2024 | Statista](#)

	<p>The proportion of pensioners in relative poverty is much lower now than during the 1960s. Relative poverty rates for children and working-age adults rose during the 1980s. Despite some reduction for working-age adults with children, poverty rates for all groups are much closer than has historically been the case.</p> <p>The proportion of the UK population identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) increased from 1.6% in 2014 to 2.2% in 2018. Younger people, aged 16 to 24 years, were most likely to identify as LGB in 2018 (4.4%). There are regional variations, people in London were most likely to identify as LGB (2.8%), with people in the North East the least likely (1.8%)⁹⁷.</p>			
Communities – Population, Employment, and Viability: The location of major settlements and areas of population.	The densest areas of population within the UK are within towns and cities.			
	The south east of England, in particular London and the surrounding areas are highly populated. Large urban areas are located along the south coast, including Brighton, Southampton, Portsmouth and Bournemouth. The midlands and north west are also locations of large urban areas, including Birmingham, Leicester, Nottingham, Greater Manchester and Liverpool. The east, north east and south west of England contain fewer major	The largest settlements in Scotland are Glasgow and Edinburgh, both of which are located in the south of the country. The east coast has several areas of population including Aberdeen, Inverness and Dundee. The highland areas and north and west coasts of Scotland are comparatively sparsely populated. (GIS Mapping)	The most populated area of Wales is the south coast, where the large urban areas of Cardiff, Newport, Bridgend and Swansea are located. The north coast has fewer major urban settlements, however areas of population are present in Rhyl, Colwyn Bay and Bangor. Central and western Wales have smaller towns and villages distributed throughout the regions. (GIS Mapping)	The major settlements in Northern Ireland are Belfast to the east and Londonderry to the north west. The area surrounding Belfast is particularly densely populated, with smaller urban areas including Bangor, Lisburn and Carrickfergus located in close proximity to Belfast. Smaller towns and villages are distributed through the rest of the country. (GIS Mapping)

⁹⁷ UK Government (2021) *Trend Deck 2021: Demographics*. Available at: [Trend Deck 2021: Demographics - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/trend-deck-2021-demographics)

	<p>settlements, however large urban areas are located in these regions, including Newcastle, Sunderland, Leeds and Bristol.</p> <p>(GIS Mapping)</p>			
	<i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i>			
<p>Communities – Population, Employment, and Viability:</p> <p>Age Structure – Working age population</p>	<p>The Office for National Statistics compared the age structures of each of the UK countries. This was split into three categories: 0-14, 15-64 (i.e. working age) and 65+. Mid-year population estimates provide annual and more recent data on these age structures⁹⁸.</p> <p>In mid-2023, in the UK, the estimated number of the population in each age group was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 – 14: 11,648,215 (17.1%) • 15 – 64: 43,692,828 (64.0%) • 65+: 12,924,166 (18.9%) 			
	In mid-2023, in England, the estimated percentage of the population in each age group was ⁹⁹ :	In mid-2023, in Scotland, the estimated percentage of the population in each age group was ¹⁰⁰ :	In mid-2023, in Wales, the estimated percentage of	In mid-2023, in Northern Ireland, the estimated percentage of the

⁹⁸ Office for National Statistics (2024). *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁹⁹ Office for National Statistics (2024). *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰⁰ Office for National Statistics (2024). *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 – 14: 9,942,344 (17.2%) 15 – 64: 36,964, 892 (64.1%) 65+: 10,783,087 (18.7%) 	0 – 14: 833,031 (15.2%) 15 – 64: 3,540,708 (64.5%) 65+: 1,116,361 (20.3%)	the population in each age group was ¹⁰¹ : 0 – 14: 510,621 (16.1%) 15 – 64: 1,971,547 (62.3%) • 65+: 682,236 (21.6%)	population in each age group was ¹⁰² : 0 – 14: 362,219 (18.9%) 15 – 64: 1,215,681 (63.3%) 65+: 342,482 (17.8%)
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>In mid-2023, there were 12.9 million people aged 65 years and over (18.9%) and 2.5% were aged 85 years and over. From mid-2013 to mid-2023, the number of children (those aged under 15 years) increased to 11.6 million from 11.3 million and the working age population (those aged 16 to 64 years) increased to 43.7 million from 41.6 million. The number of people aged 65 years and over increased by 22.9% to 12.4 million. The number of people aged 65 years and over increased to 12.9 million from 11.1 million, the largest percentage growth of any group.¹⁰³</p>			
Communities – Population, Employment, and Viability: Unemployment	The definition of unemployed people within the UK is specified by the International Labour Organisation. This defines unemployed people as being without a job, having been actively seeking work in the past four weeks and are available to start work in the next two weeks, or people who are out of work, have found a job and are waiting to start it in the next two weeks ¹⁰⁴ .			

¹⁰¹ Office for National Statistics (2024) *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰² Office for National Statistics (2024) *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰³ Office for National Statistics (2024) *Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland*. Available: [Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰⁴ Office for National Statistics (2020) *A guide to labour market statistics*. Available: [A guide to labour market statistics - Office for National Statistics](#)

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	As of August 2024, the unemployment rate in England is 4.4% ¹⁰⁵ .	As of August 2024, the unemployment rate in Scotland is 3.3% ¹⁰⁶ .	As of August 2024, the unemployment rate in Wales is 5.3% ¹⁰⁷ .	As of August 2024, the unemployment rate in Northern Ireland is 2.0% ¹⁰⁸ .
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>The unemployment rate has fluctuated in the UK since 1992. A general decrease in unemployment rates can be seen throughout the UK since the period of economic recession between 2009 and 2012, however this is largely dependent on economic performance.</p> <p>Since the coronavirus pandemic, unemployment rates have begun to increase. However, as this is still ongoing and is seen as temporary, there is still some uncertainty about the accuracy of this data and the effects on unemployment that will be present in the long-term.</p>			
Communities – Population,	This is a measure of people, who are economically active, expressed as a percentage of all people (aged 16-64).			

¹⁰⁵ Office for National Statistics (2024) *LFS: ILO unemployment rate: England: All: %: SA*. Available: [LFS: ILO unemployment rate: England: All: %: SA - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰⁶ Office for National Statistics (2024) *LFS: ILO unemployment rate: Scotland: All: %: SA*. Available: [LFS: ILO unemployment rate: Scotland: All: %: SA - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰⁷ Office for National Statistics (2024) *LFS: ILO unemployment rate: Wales: All: %: SA*. Available: [LFS: ILO unemployment rate: Wales: All: %: SA - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰⁸ Office for National Statistics (2024) *LFS: ILO unemployment rate: Northern Ireland: All: %: SA*. Available: [LFS: ILO unemployment rate: Northern Ireland: All: %: SA - Office for National Statistics](#)

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Employment, and Viability: Economic Activity Rates	As of August 2024, the economic activity rate in England was 78.8% ¹⁰⁹ .	As of August 2024, the economic activity rate in Scotland was 76.3% ¹¹⁰ .	As of August 2024, the economic activity rate in Wales was 74.1% ¹¹¹ .	As of August 2024, the economic activity rate in Northern Ireland was 71.8% ¹¹² .
	Supporting Trend Data: Economic activity rates in the UK have not varied significantly since 1992.			
Communities – Supporting Infrastructure: Locations of Strategic Rail Links	The locations of strategic rail links are detailed below.			
	The strategic rail network in England is well developed. All major cities are connected as are the majority of significant towns. Extensive rail networks are located around large conurbations such as London and Greater Manchester, with the major cities in the midlands being well connected. Remote, rural	The larger cities of Scotland are located in the south of the country and as such, this is where the majority of the strategic rail network is focused. This extends up the east coast to the cities of Dundee, Aberdeen and Inverness. The far north and western regions of Scotland are far less served by rail. This is largely as a result of fewer	Both the north and south coast of Wales are well connected by rail, linking the major coastal cities such as Cardiff and Swansea in the south, and Llandudno, Bangor and Holyhead in the north. Few major branch lines extend from these links, and the central and western regions of Wales are	The strategic rail network in Northern Ireland is concentrated in the east of the country around Belfast and the surrounding cities of Lisburn, Antrim, Bangor and Carrickfergus. The network extends to the north and north west, with Londonderry being the most westerly point. The central and south west

¹⁰⁹ Office for National Statistics (2024) *LFS: Economic activity rate: England: Aged 16-64: All: %: SA*. Available: [LFS: Economic activity rate: England: Aged 16-64: All: %: SA - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹¹⁰ Office for National Statistics (2024) *LFS: Economic activity rate: Scotland: Aged 16-64: All: %: SA*. Available: [LFS: Economic activity rate: Scotland: Aged 16-64: All: %: SA - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹¹¹ Office for National Statistics (2024) *LFS: Economic activity rate: Wales: Aged 16-64: All: %: SA*. Available: [LFS: Economic activity rate: Wales: Aged 16-64: All: %: SA - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹¹² Office for National Statistics (2024) *LFS: Economic activity rate: Northern Ireland: Aged 16-64: All: %: SA*. Available: [LFS: Economic activity rate: Northern Ireland: Aged 16-64: All: %: SA - Office for National Statistics](#)

	and coastal areas are less well served by rail. (GIS mapping)	major urban centers being located in these areas. (GIS mapping)	comparatively poorly served by rail. (GIS mapping)	regions are poorly served by rail. (GIS mapping)
	Supporting Trend Data: Major new strategic rail projects currently being undertaken in the UK include High Speed Two (HS2), Crossrail, Northern Powerhouse Rail and Midlands Engine. Upgrades to lines and electrification projects are continually taking place. It is considered unlikely that future projects will significantly increase the strategic rail network.			
Communities – Supporting Infrastructure: Locations of strategic road networks (motorways and primary roads)	The locations of motorways and primary roads are detailed below.			
	England is covered by a comprehensive network of motorways and A roads. All major cities are served by motorways, whilst towns and larger villages are connected by A routes. Areas not serviced by these connections are generally rural and in areas of low population. (GIS mapping)	The major cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh are served by the motorway network which extends north to Perth. The west coast has a substantial network of A roads linking the major coastal cities. The A road network in highland areas and the west coast are less extensive, although most towns and large villages are connected. (GIS mapping)	The south and north coast of Wales are the only areas with motorway connections. The remaining regions are serviced by the A road network which links the major towns and villages. Comparatively the central and upland regions are less provisioned with strategic network links. (GIS mapping)	The motorway network in Northern Ireland is focused around Belfast in the east, with two links extending north west and south west. These terminate in Randalstown and Dungannon respectively. The remaining regions are well connected by the A road network, which services towns and the majority of larger villages. (GIS mapping)
	Supporting Trend Data:			

	The strategic road network in the UK is constantly undergoing maintenance and improvements to improve efficiency, such as managed motorways. It is considered unlikely that significant new strategic road networks will be developed.			
Communities – Supporting Infrastructure:	The locations of major airports ¹¹³ (+500,000) passenger per year as of 2023) are detailed below.			
Location of Airports	<p>Major Airports in England as of 2023 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heathrow • Gatwick • Manchester • Stanstead • Luton • Birmingham • Bristol • Newcastle • Liverpool (John Lennon) • Leeds Bradford • East Midlands International • London City • Bournemouth 	<p>Major Airports in Scotland as of 2023 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edinburgh • Glasgow • Aberdeen • Inverness • Prestwick 	<p>The only major airport in Wales as of 2023 is Cardiff.</p>	<p>Major Airports in Northern Ireland as of 2023 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast International • Belfast City (George Best)

¹¹³ UK Civil Aviation Authority (2024) *UK airport data 2023*. Available: [Table 01 Size of UK Airports PDF Annual.rdl](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southampton 			
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>The proposed expansion of London Heathrow Airport is likely to increase airport capacity in the south east of England if approved, in addition to smaller-scale improvements at other airports. It is considered unlikely that other significant new airports will be developed, although capacity may be increased through development at existing sites.</p>			
Communities – Supporting Infrastructure:	The locations of major ports (handling +2m tonnes of freight per year as of 2023 ¹¹⁴) are detailed below.			
Location of Ports	<p>As of December 2024, there are 15 major ports in England:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bristol • Dover • Felixstowe • Grimsby & Immingham • Harwich • Hull • Liverpool • London • Manchester 	<p>As of December 2024, there are four major ports in Scotland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clyde • Forth • Orkney • Sullem Voe 	<p>As of December 2024, there are two major ports in Wales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiff • Port Talbot 	<p>As of December 2024, there are two major ports in Northern Ireland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast • Larne

¹¹⁴ UK Government (2024) *Port and domestic waterborne freight statistics: data tables (PORT)*. Available at: [Port and domestic waterborne freight statistics: data tables \(PORT\) - GOV.UK](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medway • Portsmouth • River Trent • Rivers Hull and Humber • Southampton • Tees and Hartlepool 			
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>It is considered unlikely that significant new strategic port development will take place.</p>			
<p>Health and Well-Being:</p> <p>Radioactivity levels in the environment</p>	<p>Radiation levels in the UK are monitored regularly. This is undertaken by the Radioactive Incident Monitoring Network (RIMNET), the Environment Agency, Public Health England, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and operators of nuclear sites.</p> <p>Environment agencies monitor radioactivity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check whether radiation exposure conforms to legal limits; • check that radioactivity in food and the environment from authorised releases and discharges does not affect people's health or the environment; • gather long-term information on concentrations and trends so that we can identify any changes and take action if required, and; • assess the public's total exposure to radiation around nuclear sites <p>Monitoring includes several high volume air samplers, which are capable of detecting tiny amounts of radioactive particles in the air. Analysis can be carried out for short lived radionuclides. Results are published in Radioactivity in</p>			

Food and the Environment (RIFE) reports. The latest RIFE report was published in 2020 and contains data for 2019 ¹¹⁵ .				
In 2023, people living around the Cumbrian coast (near Sellafield), Capenhurst and Amersham were the most exposed from sources of artificial radioactivity. The highest exposure was 23% of the legal limit in 2023 due to people eating locally produced seafood (fish and crustacea) around the Cumbrian coast. This is down from 24% of the legal limit in 2022. ¹¹⁶	In 2023 in Scotland, people eating food collected from areas along the Dumfries and Galloway coastline were the most exposed from releases of radioactivity. The exposure in 2023 was approximately 2% of the legal limit, and as in previous years, this was mostly due to the effects of past discharges from the Sellafield site.	In 2023, the highest exposure in Wales was for those people living near the Trawsfynydd nuclear power station, which is being decommissioned. This was due to them consuming locally produced food (milk), containing radioactivity released from, mainly historical, permitted discharges from the station. The exposure was approximately 3% of the legal limit	In Northern Ireland, exposure to the public from artificial radioactivity in 2023 was estimated to be less than 1% of the legal limit.	
Supporting Trend Data: Overall, between 2022 and 2023 there have been no significant changes to the radioactivity measured in food and the environment around UK nuclear sites and other locations remote from these sites. Exposure from all sources of naturally occurring and artificial radioactivity to members of the public was well below legal limits, demonstrating that radioactivity in food and the environment is safe. ¹¹⁷				

¹¹⁵ Environment Agency (2024) *Monitoring radioactivity*. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/monitoring-radioactivity>

¹¹⁶ Environment Agency (2024) *RIFE 29 Summary, Radioactivity in Food and the Environment, 2023*. Available: [RIFE 29 Summary, Radioactivity in Food and the Environment, 2023 - GOV.UK](#)

¹¹⁷ Environment Agency (2024) *RIFE 29 Summary, Radioactivity in Food and the Environment, 2023*. Available: [RIFE 29 Summary, Radioactivity in Food and the Environment, 2023 - GOV.UK](#)

Health and Well-Being:	<p>The Measuring National Well-being (MNW) programme set out to establish measures to understand and monitor national well-being¹¹⁸.</p>
<p>The Measuring National Well-being programme</p>	<p>In April – June 2024, the percentage of UK adults that said they had a very high life satisfaction was 24.6% which was a decrease from 30.5% in April – June 2019. Meanwhile 5.4% said they had a low level of life satisfaction in April – June 2024 which has increased from 4.5% in April – June 2019¹¹⁹. During the following quarter (July – September 2024) the figure for low level of life satisfaction decreased to 4.7%.</p> <p>In April – June 2024, the percentage of UK adults that said that the feeling of things they do in life is worthwhile was a very high level was 32.8% which has decreased from 36.5% in April – June 2019. Meanwhile 3.9% said they had a low level of feeling the things they do in life is worthwhile. There hasn't been much of a long term change as the number in April – June 2019 was 3.7%.</p> <p>In April – June 2024, the percentage of UK adults said that had a very high level of happiness was 31.7% which has decreased from April – June 2019 from 36.2%. Meanwhile 8.5% said they had a low level of happiness in April – June 2024 which has slightly increased from 8.2% in April – June 2019.</p> <p>In April – June 2024, the percentage of UK adults that had a very high level of anxiety was 23.4% which has increased from 21.2% in April – June 2019. Meanwhile 33.1% said they had a very low level of anxiety in April – June 2024 which has decreased from 40.4% in April – June 2019.</p> <p>In the financial year ending (FYE) 2023 median household disposable income decreased by an average of 0.3% per year between FYE 2020 and FYE 2023, compared with a longer-term average increase of 0.8% per year over the 10 years leading up to 2023 (FYE 2013 to FYE 2023) with median household disposable income in the UK was £34,500, a decrease of 2.5% from FYE 2022.¹²⁰</p>

¹¹⁸ Office for National Statistics (2019) *Measuring national well-being in the UK: international comparisons, 2019*. Available; [Measuring national well-being: Life in the UK - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹¹⁹ Office for National Statistics (2024) *UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard*. Available: [UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹²⁰ Office for National Statistics (2024) *Average household income, UK: financial ending 2023*. Available: [Average household income, UK - Office for National Statistics](#)

	<p>Of adults in Great Britain, 86.5% said that they were fairly or very satisfied with their accommodation, when asked in September 2024. This shows no short-term change (85.1% in September to October 2023). Long-term change is not assessed because data for these comparisons are not available¹²¹.</p> <p>Of adults in Great Britain, 67.1% said that they were fairly or very satisfied with their health in general, when asked in September 2024. This shows no short-term change (66.9% in September to October 2023). Long-term change is not assessed because data for these comparisons are not available¹²².</p> <p>Of adults in Great Britain, 69.0% said that they were fairly or very satisfied with their main job in September 2024. This shows no short-term change (69.6% in September to October 2023). Long-term change is not assessed because data for these comparisons are not available.¹²³</p>
<p>Health and Well-Being:</p> <p>The English Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019</p>	<p>The IMD is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas (Lower-Super Output Areas) in England. The Index ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived) to 32,844 (least deprived)¹²⁴.</p> <p>The SIMD shows where the most deprived areas in Scotland and is a relative measure of deprivation. Scotland is split into 6,976 zones with indicators measured including income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing¹²⁵.</p> <p>The WIMD is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. WIMD ranks all small areas in Wales from 1 (most deprived) to 1,909 (least deprived)¹²⁶.</p>

¹²¹ Office for National Statistics (2024) *UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard*. Available: [UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹²² Office for National Statistics (2024) *UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard*. Available: [UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹²³ Office for National Statistics (2024) *UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard*. Available: [UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹²⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) *English indices of deprivation 2019*. Available: [English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK](#)

¹²⁵ Scottish Government (2020) *Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020*. Available: [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 - gov.scot](#)

¹²⁶ Welsh Government (2019) *Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation*. Available: [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: analysis relating to areas of deep-rooted deprivation | GOV.WALES](#)

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020	The NIMDM comprises seven domains of deprivation, each developed to measure a distinct form or type of deprivation. This provides a mechanism for ranking the 890 Super Output areas (SOAs) from the most deprived (rank 1) to the least deprived (rank 890) ¹²⁷ .			
	A check of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government report of Index of Multiple Deprivation in January 2025 shows the most recent data available. As of 2019 the south east, south west and east of England are the least deprived areas in the UK.	A check of the Scottish Government's report of Index of Multiple Deprivation in January 2025 shows the most recent data available. As of January 2020, the most deprived areas in Scotland are concentrated around the populated central areas of Glasgow, Edinburgh Stirling, Perth, Kilmarnock and Dundee. Pockets of deprivation are also located in other urban centres throughout the country, such as Stranraer in the south west, Oban in the west and Aberdeen in the East. The islands of Stornoway and the Orkneys are comparatively deprived to the majority of Scotland.	A check of the Welsh Government's report of Index of Multiple Deprivation in January 2025 shows the most recent data available. As of August 2022, the south east and north east coast are the most deprived areas in Wales. Deprivation is most concentrated in the south east, around the urban areas of Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Bridgend. The smaller towns within the valleys of the south east, such as Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil are similarly deprived. Comparatively the rural areas of Wales are considerably less deprived.	A check of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency report of Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure in January 2025 shows the most recent data available. As of November 2017 the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland are the urban centres of Belfast in the east and Derry in the north west. Deprivation is also recorded in rural areas, including around Cookstown in central Northern Ireland, Crossmaglen in the south and Strabane in the west. The lowest deprived areas are North Down, Fermanagh and South Tyrone, Strangford and South Antrim.
	Deprivation increases in urban areas, with towns and cities generally being more deprived than rural areas. The north west and north east are the most deprived areas of England. Middlesbrough, Knowsley, Kingston upon Hull, Liverpool and Manchester are the five local authority districts with the largest proportions of highly			
The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019				
Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2017				

¹²⁷ Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (2017) *Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 (NIMDM2017)*. Available: [Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 \(NIMDM2017\) | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#)

	deprived neighbourhoods in England.			
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>It is not advised to compare the deprivation measures across the UK as data definitions, collection methods and base populations are not the same across the devolved administrations.</p> <p>Overall, 88 per cent of neighbourhoods that are in the most deprived decile according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD2019) were also the most deprived according to the IMD2015. As was the case in previous versions of the Indices, IMD2019 reveals concentrations of deprivation in large urban conurbations, areas that have historically had large heavy industry manufacturing and/or mining sectors (such as Birmingham, Nottingham, Hartlepool), coastal towns (such as Blackpool or Hastings), and parts of east London. There are also pockets of deprivation surrounded by less deprived places in every region of England.</p> <p>Six council areas have a larger share of the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland compared with SIMD 2016. Three council areas have a smaller share. The rest have changed by less than 2 percentage points. The councils with the largest decrease are Glasgow City, Renfrewshire, and City of Edinburgh. The councils with the largest increase are Aberdeen City, North Lanarkshire, Moray, East Lothian, Highland, and North Ayrshire.</p> <p>In WIMD 2019, there were pockets of high relative deprivation in the South Wales cities and valleys, and in some North Wales coastal and border towns. The overall picture is similar to that of WIMD 2014. Seven of the ten most deprived areas from WIMD 2014 remained in the ten most deprived areas in WIMD 2019.</p> <p>Since 2005 there has been little change in the areas of worst deprivation within Northern Ireland.</p>			
Health and Well-Being:	In Wales, Quiet Areas are formally designated under the Environmental Noise (Wales) Regulations 2006. These are areas where planning policy should consider noise management more carefully. The areas designated include ¹²⁸ :			
Quiet Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiff and Penarth; 			

¹²⁸ Gov.Wales (2025). *Quiet Area Maps*. Available: [Quiet area maps | GOV.WALES](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newport; and • Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. 			
Historic Environment: World Heritage Sites	<p>World Heritage Sites are designated to meet the UK's commitments under the World Heritage Convention and the sites are designated for their globally important cultural or natural interest and require appropriate management and protection measures¹²⁹. There are 35 World Heritage Sites in the United Kingdom.</p> <p>The location of World Heritage Sites are shown in Figures 5A and 5B. Note: Frontiers of the Roman Empire is located in both England and Scotland. Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal is located in both England and Wales</p>			
	<p>As of July 2024, there are 18 World Heritage Sites in England¹³⁰:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleinheim Palace • Canterbury Cathedral • City of Bath • Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape • Derwent Valley Mills • Dorset and East Devon Coast • Durham Castle and Cathedral 	<p>As of July 2024, there are six World Heritage sites in Scotland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Flow Country • Forth Bridge • Frontiers of the Roman Empire • Heart of Neolithic Orkney • New Lanark • Old and New Towns of Edinburgh • St Kilda 	<p>As of July 2024, there are four World Heritage Sites in Wales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blaenavon Industrial Landscape • Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd • The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales • Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal 	<p>As of July 2024, there are two World Heritage Sites in Northern Ireland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast • Gracehill

¹²⁹ UNESCO (2024) World Heritage Convention - *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*. Available: [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland - UNESCO World Heritage Convention](#)

¹³⁰ UNESCO (2024) *World Heritage Sites*. Available: [World Heritage Sites – UNESCO UK](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The English Lake District • Frontiers of the Roman Empire • Gorham’s Cave Complex • Great Spas of Europe • Ironbridge Gorge • Jodrell Bank Observatory • Maritime Greenwich • Palace of Westminster • Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal • Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew • Saltaire • Stonehenge • Studley Royal Park • Tower of London 			
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>The first World Heritage Sites within the UK were designated in 1986. Sites can continue to be nominated, with the last site on the UK mainland being The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales, designated in 2021. Of all the sites in</p>			

	the UK, only the Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City site has been placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The list presently comprises 53 sites in total worldwide. These are sites at which conditions are present to threaten the characteristics for which a site was placed on the World Heritage List ¹³¹ .			
Historic Environment Scheduled Monuments	Scheduling is the process of legal protecting selected monuments of national importance, with a view to securing their long term preservation. The monitoring of Scheduled Monuments is undertaken by Historic England. Scheduled Monuments are not always visible above ground.			
	The condition of Scheduled Monuments is monitored as part of Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' programme. Local government archaeological services, plus independent national and local heritage organisations and community groups can also play important roles in their curation, plus that of non-scheduled but nationally important monuments. It is to be noted that a monument not designated as a Scheduled Monument does not necessarily imply that it is not of national importance ¹³² .			
	. As of July 2024, there are almost 20,000 Scheduled Monuments located throughout England ¹³³ .	. As of 2019, there are approximately 8,000 Scheduled Monuments located throughout Scotland ¹³⁴ .	. As of April 2023, there are over 4,000 Scheduled monuments located throughout Wales ¹³⁵ .	. As of March 2024, there are over 2000 Scheduled Historic Monuments located throughout Northern Ireland ¹³⁶
Supporting Trend Data:				

¹³¹ UNESCO (2024) *World Heritage Convention - United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*. Available: [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland - UNESCO World Heritage Convention](#)

¹³² Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2013) *Scheduled Monuments & nationally important but non-scheduled monuments*. Available: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/249695/SM_policy_statement_10-2013_2_.pdf

¹³³ Historic England (2024) *Scheduled Monuments*. Available: <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/scheduled-monuments/>

¹³⁴ Historic Environment Scotland (2020) *Designations 2020 Onwards*. Available: [scotlands-scheduled-monuments.pdf](#)

¹³⁵ Welsh Government (2024) *Scheduled Monuments*. Available: [Scheduled Monuments | DataMapWales](#)

¹³⁶ Department for Communities (2024) *Scheduled Historic Monuments*. Available: [Scheduled Historic Monuments | Department for Communities](#)

	Applications for sites to be Scheduled can be made at any time and is an ongoing process. Since 2007 the number of Scheduled Monuments has increased by approximately 2,000 in England, 400 in Wales and 163 in Northern Ireland. Wales has an ongoing planned policy of enhancing the number of sites on the Schedule.			
Historic Environment: Conservation Areas	<p>Conservation Areas are designated for their special architectural and historic interest and were first designated in 1967. There are many different types including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the centres of our historic towns and cities • fishing and mining villages • 18th and 19th-century suburbs • model housing estates • country houses set in their historic parks • historic transport links and their environs, such as stretches of canal <p>Most Conservation Areas are designated by the local planning authority and as such are best identified on a local basis.</p> <p>The locations of Conservation Areas are shown in Figure 5A and 5B.</p>			
	As of October 2023, there are approximately 10,000 Conservation Areas in England. ¹³⁷ ,	. As of August 2024, there are over 600 Conservation Zones in Scotland ¹³⁸ .	As of July 2022, there are over 500 Conservation Areas in Wales. ¹³⁹	. As of September 2022, there are 58 Conservation Areas in Northern Ireland. ¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Historic England (2023) *What is a Conservation Area?* Available: [Conservation Areas | Historic England open data](#)

¹³⁸ Historic Environment Scotland (2024) *Conservation Areas - Scotland*. Available: [Conservation Areas - Scotland - data.gov.uk](#)

¹³⁹ Welsh Government (2024) *Conservation Areas*. Available: [Conservation areas | Cadw](#)

¹⁴⁰ Department for Infrastructure (2024) *Conservation areas*. Available: [Conservation Area Guides \(A-Z list\) | Department for Infrastructure](#)

<p>Historic Environment:</p> <p>Listed Buildings</p>	<p>Listing of buildings is concerned with recognising the buildings special architectural and historic interest, with a view to protecting the building, under the planning system for future generations to enjoy. All buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed, as are most of those built between 1700 and 1840. Particularly careful selection is required for buildings from the period after 1945. Usually, a building has to be over 30 years old to be eligible for listing¹⁴¹.</p> <p>There are three categories of listed building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest, • Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest; • Grade II buildings are of special interest; it is the most likely grade of listing for a home owner. <p>Due to the numbers, listed buildings are best identified on a local basis.</p>			
	<p>. As of November 2024, there are 370,000 Listed Buildings in England¹⁴².</p>	<p>.As of January 2025, there are around 47,000 listed building records in Scotland¹⁴³.</p>	<p>As of 2024, there are over 30,00 listed buildings in Wales¹⁴⁴</p>	<p>As of 2024, there are over 8,900 Listed Buildings in Northern Ireland¹⁴⁵.</p>
<p>Historic Environment:</p> <p>Historic Battlefields</p>	<p>The purpose of the Register of Historic Battlefields in England is to offer protection through the planning system and to promote a better understanding of their significance and public enjoyment. If the site of a battle is to merit registration it has to have been an engagement of national significance, and to be capable of close definition on the ground. In Scotland, Historic Battlefields are listed in the Inventory of Historic Battlefields. The Inventory of Historic Battlefields in Wales is a non-statutory Inventory which means there is no primary legislation enacted to protect entire battlefields.</p>			

¹⁴¹ Historic England (2021) Listed Buildings. Available: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings/>

¹⁴² Historic England (2024) *What are Listed Buildings?* Available: [What are Listed Buildings? How England's historic buildings are protected | Historic England](#)

¹⁴³ Historic Environment Scotland (2025) *What is listing?* Available: [What is Listing? | Public Body for Scotland's Historic Environment](#)

¹⁴⁴ Welsh Government (2024) *Listed Buildings*. Available: [Listed Buildings | DataMapWales](#)

¹⁴⁵ Department for Communities (2024) *Listed Buildings – An Introduction*. Available: [Listed Buildings - An Introduction | Department for Communities](#)

	Locations of Historic Battlefields in England and Scotland are shown in Figures 5A and 5B .			
	As of October 2024, there are 47 registered battlefields in England. ¹⁴⁶	. As of August 2020, there are 40 sites on the Inventory of Historic Battlefields in Scotland ¹⁴⁷ .	As of August 2020, there are over 700 historic battlefields in Wales ¹⁴⁸ .	There is no formal register of historic battlefields in Northern Ireland.
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>Public consultation demonstrated strong public support for the recognition of the importance of historic battlefields in Wales and the inventory was only recently created following legislation introduced in 2016.</p>			
<p>Historic Environment:</p> <p>Registered Parks and Gardens</p>	<p>The purpose of Registers of Historic Parks and Gardens in England is to encourage the protection of gardens, grounds and other open spaces which are of historic importance.</p> <p>Historic Environment Scotland maintains the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes which identifies historic grounds and designed landscapes intentionally laid out for artistic effect.</p> <p>In Wales, Cadw maintains the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, the Department for Communities maintains the Register of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes.</p> <p>Locations of Parks and Gardens are shown in Figures 5A and 5B.</p>			
	As of October 2024, there are over 1,700 Registered Parks and Gardens on the	As of June 2024, there are 368 Gardens and	As of February 2022, there are nearly 400 registered	As of September 2024, there are over 700 historic parks, gardens and

¹⁴⁶ Historic England (2024) *What are Registered Battlefield?* Available: [What Are Registered Battlefields? | Historic England](#)

¹⁴⁷ Historic Environment Scotland (2020) *Designations 2020 Onwards*. Available: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=e8d84fb0-7b16-49cc-a87a-abce00884e10>

¹⁴⁸ Cadw (2024) *Historic Battlefields in Wales*. Available: [Historic battlefields in Wales | Cadw](#)

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	National Heritage List in England ¹⁴⁹	Designated Landscapes in Scotland ¹⁵⁰ .	historic parks and gardens in Wales ¹⁵¹ .	demesnes in Northern Ireland ¹⁵² .
	<i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i>			
Historic Environment: Historic Landscape Characterisation	<p>Historic landscape characterisation (HLC) can be used to help secure good quality, well designed and sustainable places. It is a method of identification and interpretation of the varying historic character within an area that looks beyond individual heritage assets as it brigades understanding of the whole landscape and townscape into repeating HLC Types¹⁵³.</p> <p>HLCs are typically held by the relevant local Historic Environment Record in England¹⁵⁴. The Welsh equivalent is the Registered Historic Landscapes¹⁵⁵.</p> <p>There is no Historic Landscape Characterisation in Scotland and Northern Ireland.</p>			
Historic Environment: Areas of Archaeological Importance	<p>The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 allows the Government to designate as an area of archaeological importance any area which appears to merit treatment as such. In England there are five areas designated as areas of archaeological importance under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979: the historic city centres of Canterbury, Chester, Exeter, Hereford and York¹⁵⁶.</p>			

¹⁴⁹ Historic England (2024) *What are Registered Parks and Gardens?* Available: [What Are Registered Parks and Gardens? | Historic England](#)

¹⁵⁰ Historic Environment Scotland (2024) *Gardens and Designated Landscapes*. Available: [Downloads](#)

¹⁵¹ Cadw (2024) *Registered historic parks and gardens*. Available: [Registered historic parks and gardens | Cadw](#)

¹⁵² Department for Communities (2024) *Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes*. Available: [Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes | Department for Communities](#)

¹⁵³ Historic England (2021) *Historic Landscape Characterisation*. Available: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/methods/characterisation/historic-landscape-characterisation/#Section4Text>

¹⁵⁴ Archaeology Data Service (2018) *Historic Landscape Characterisation* Available: <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/HLC/index.cfm>

¹⁵⁵ Cadw (2024) *Registered Historic Landscapes*. Available: [Registered historic landscapes | Cadw](#)

¹⁵⁶ Historic England (2021) *Areas of Archaeological Importance*. Available: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/archaeologicalimportance/>

Historic Environment: Protected Wrecks	The Protection of Wrecks Act (1973) allows the Government to designate a wreck to prevent uncontrolled interference. Designated sites are identified as being likely to contain the remains of a vessel, or its contents, which are of historical, artistic or archaeological importance ¹⁵⁷ .			
	The protected wreck designation has been replaced in Scotland by Historic Marine Protected Areas (Historic MPAs). Historic MPAs protect marine historic assets of national importance in territorial waters around Scotland (out to 12 nautical miles). This includes historic shipwrecks and aircrafts. The Scottish Government designate marine protected areas (Historic MPAs) under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and Historic Environment Scotland advise Scottish Government.			
	Locations of Protected Wrecks are shown in Figures 5A and 5B .			
	As of January 2025, there are 57 Protected Wrecks in English Waters. The majority of these are located along the south coast ¹⁵⁸ .	As of March 2025, there are 9 Historic MPAs in Scottish waters. These are primarily located on the western coast and extend to northern regions ¹⁵⁹ .	As of July 2017, there are 6 Protected Wrecks in Welsh waters. These are primarily located around the north west and north coast, with one being located off Pembrokeshire in the south west ¹⁶⁰ .	As of December 2024, there is 1 Protected Wreck in Northern Irish waters, La Girona, which is located on the North Antrim coast ¹⁶¹ .
<i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i>				

¹⁵⁷ Historic England (2021) *Protected Wreck Sites*. Available: <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/consents/protected-wreck-sites/>

¹⁵⁸ Historic England (2024) *Protected Wreck Sites Planning Consents*. Available: [Protected Wreck Sites Planning Consents | Historic England](#)

¹⁵⁹ Historic Environment Scotland (2025) *Downloads – Historic Marine Protected Areas*. Available: [Downloads](#)

¹⁶⁰ Cadw (2024) *Marine historic environment*. Available: [Marine historic environment | Cadw](#)

¹⁶¹ Department for Communities (2021) *Shipwrecks*. Available: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/shipwrecks-0>

<p>Historic Environment:</p> <p>Historic Environment Records (HERs)</p>	<p>HERs are information services that provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the archaeology and historic built environment of a defined geographic area. They contain details on local archaeological sites and finds, historic buildings and historic landscapes and are regularly updated¹⁶².</p> <p>Whilst not currently a statutory duty Section 230 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act makes provision for HERs to be given a statutory status and requiring local authorities to maintain HERs.</p> <p>Sections 194 and 195 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 require the Welsh Ministers to compile and keep up to date a publicly accessible historic environment record for each local authority area in Wales.</p>			
	<p>In England, there are over 80 HERs which are maintained and managed by local authorities as the essential core of historic environment services. These are mainly county council or unitary authority based, but may also be held by joint services (i.e. more than one authority working together), district councils, and national parks. Similar records are maintained by major landowners, such as the National Trust.</p> <p>More information on these records can be found here:</p>	<p>The National record of the Historic Environment contains a vast range of buildings, archaeological monuments and industrial and maritime sites, to give an unparalleled view of Scotland's past. It holds more than 5 million items and continues to record all aspects of the historic environment.</p> <p>For further detail, the following link can be accessed:</p> <p>https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/archives-and-research</p>	<p>Historic environment records in Wales include information on tens of thousands of historic sites, thousands of records relating to investigative work across Wales, and records of hundreds of thousands of historic place names.</p> <p>Further detail can be accessed at the following link:</p> <p>https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/placemaking/historic-environment-records</p>	<p>The Historic Environment Record of Northern Ireland consists of written records, photographs, maps, drawings, and artefacts, together with an extensive library of books and journals specialising in heritage-related subjects.</p> <p>For detailed information on these records and for interactive maps and databases, visit the following link:</p> <p>https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/historic-environment</p>

¹⁶² Historic England (2015) *Historic Environment Records (HERs)*. Available: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/information-management/hers/>

	https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/chr/default.aspx	collections/national-record-of-the-historic-environment/		environment-record-northern-ireland-heron/
	<i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i>			
Historic Environment: Heritage at Risk	The Heritage at Risk Register includes buildings, places of worship, monuments, parks and gardens, conservation areas, battlefields and wreck sites that are listed and have been assessed and found to be at risk in England ¹⁶³ .			
Historic Environment: Non-Designated Heritage assets	There are a large number of heritage assets located across England and Wales, covering the full range of human activity and timeframes. Non-designated heritage assets are locally-identified 'buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets'. While these assets may not have been formally designated, this should not necessarily be taken as an indication of their merit – consideration of such assets and their setting should be made during any scheme design. Lists of non-designated heritage assets, as well as advice on how these should be considered in the local context, can be obtained from Local Authorities.			
Historic Environment: Registered Historic Landscapes	To recognise the value of historic landscapes and to raise awareness of their importance, Cadw has compiled a register of landscapes of historic interest in Wales. Cadw have identified 58 landscapes of outstanding or special historic interest, considered to be the best examples of different types of historic landscapes in Wales ¹⁶⁴ .			

¹⁶³ Historic England (2024) *Search the List – Find listed buildings, monuments, battlefields and more*. Available: [Search the List - Find listed buildings, monuments, battlefields and more | Historic England](#)

¹⁶⁴ Cadw (2024) *Registered Historic Landscapes*. Available: [Registered historic landscapes | Cadw](#)

<p>Landscape:</p> <p>National Parks</p>	<p>In England and Wales, the purpose of National Parks is to conserve and enhance landscapes within the countryside whilst promoting public enjoyment of them and having regard for the social and economic well-being of those living within them.</p> <p>The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 established the National Park designation in England and Wales. In addition, the Environment Act 1995 requires relevant authorities to have regard for nature conservation. Special Acts of Parliament may be used to establish statutory authorities for their management (e.g. the Broads Authority was set up through the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988).</p> <p>The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 enabled the establishment of National Parks in Scotland. In addition to the two purposes described above, National Parks in Scotland are designated to promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the area and the sustainable social and economic development of its communities. These purposes have equal weight and are to be pursued collectively unless conservation interests are threatened. Where these aims conflict, the relevant National Park authority must prioritise the first of these aims¹⁶⁵.</p> <p>Note that every National Park is required to prepare and publish a National Park Management Plan which formulates its policy for the management of the relevant National Park and for the carrying out of its functions in relation to that National Park and note needs to be made of these in relation to any National Park that may be affected.</p> <p>Locations of National Parks within England, Scotland and Wales are shown in Figures 6A and 6B.¹⁶⁶</p>			
	<p>As of January 2025, there are 10 National Parks in England:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broads 	<p>As of January 2025, there are two National Parks in Scotland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cairngorms 	<p>As of January 2025, there are three National Parks in Wales</p> <p>Error! Bookmark not defined.:</p>	<p>There are currently no National Parks within Northern Ireland.</p>

¹⁶⁵ NatureScot (2021) National Park. Available: <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/protected-areas/national-designations/national-park>

¹⁶⁶ National Parks UK (2021) Your National Parks. Available: <https://www.nationalparks.uk/parks/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dartmoor • Exmoor • Lake District • New Forest • Northumberland • North York Moors • Peak District • South Downs • Yorkshire Dales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loch Lomond and the Trossachs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brecon Beacons • Pembrokeshire Coast • Snowdonia 	
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>The designation of National Parks is an ongoing process with two being added in England since 2008 (South Downs and Broads). Within Northern Ireland there are proposals to create a National Park within the Mourne Mountains¹⁶⁷.</p>			
<p>Landscape:</p> <p>National Landscapes / AONBs and National Scenic Areas</p>	<p>There are 46 National Landscapes / AONBs in the UK covering 14% of England, Wales and Northern Ireland including moorland, farmland, coast, forests, including UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves, a Geopark and International Dark Sky Reserves. These are places with national importance, protected for the nation's benefit: cherished by their communities and celebrated by the nation. The legal designation is 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'¹⁶⁸.</p> <p>National Landscapes are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, amended in the Environment Act 1995. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 clarifies the procedure and purpose of designating National Landscapes.</p>			

¹⁶⁷ Northern Ireland Assembly (2008) Potential Impacts of National Parks Designation with Particular Reference to The Proposed Mournes National Park. Available: http://archive.niassembly.gov.uk/environment/2007mandate/Research/0801National%20Parks%20Mournes_.pdf

¹⁶⁸ National Landscapes Association (2024) *National Landscapes*. Available: [National Landscapes - National Landscapes](#)

<p>The Glover Review did not extend to Northern Ireland and the AONBs were not renamed as National Landscapes. Originally designated in Northern Ireland under the Amenity Lands Act (Northern Ireland) 1965, AONBs are now designated under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands Order (Northern Ireland) 1985¹⁶⁹.</p> <p>National Scenic Areas (NSAs) are designated by Scottish Ministers as the best of Scotland's landscapes, deserving special protection in the nation's interest. Scottish Ministers in 2010 confirmed 40 NSAs under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended in 2006) (s.263)¹⁷⁰. NSAs are broadly equivalent to the National Landscapes found in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Locations of National Landscapes and NSAs are in Figures 6A and 6B.</p>				
	<p>As of July 2024, there are 34 AONBs located within England¹⁷¹.</p> <p>NB: the Wye Valley is on the England / Wales border.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arnside & Silverdale • Blackdown Hills 	<p>As of November 2024, there are 40 National Scenic Areas within Scotland¹⁷²:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Stewartry Coast • Fleet Valley • Nith Estuary • Eildon and Leaderfoot 	<p>As of November 2022, there are five AONBs within Wales¹⁷³:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anglesey • Clwydian Range and Dee Valley • Gower • Llŷn • Wye Valley 	<p>As of August 2020, there are eight AONBs within Northern Ireland¹⁷⁴:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antrim Coast and Glens • Binevenagh • Causeway Coast • Lagan Valley • Mourne • Ring of Gullion

¹⁶⁹ Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Northern Ireland (2020) Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside. Available: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/council-nature-conservation-and-countryside>

¹⁷⁰ NatureScot (2017) *National Scenic Areas: background, guidance and policy*. Available: [National Scenic Areas: background, guidance and policy | NatureScot](#)

¹⁷¹ Natural England (2017) Areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONBs): designation and management. Available: [Areas of outstanding natural beauty \(AONBs\): designation and management - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁷² NatureScot (2010) National Scenic Areas of Scotland: maps. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-scenic-areas-of-scotland-maps/>

¹⁷³ Natural Resources Wales (2022) Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) | DataMapWales

¹⁷⁴ National Landscapes Association (2024) National Landscapes Northern Ireland. Available: [National Landscapes - National Landscapes \(national-landscapes.org.uk\)](https://national-landscapes.org.uk)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannock Chase • Chichester Harbour • Chilterns • Cornwall • Cotswolds • Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs • Dedham Vale • Dorset • East Devon • Forest of Bowland • Howardian Hills • High Weald • Isle of Wight • Isles of Scilly • Kent Downs • Lincolnshire Wolds • Malvern Hills • Mendip Hills • Norfolk Coast • North Devon • North Pennines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Tweeddale • North Arran • Jura • Knapdale • Kyles of Bute • Loch na Keal, Isle of Mull • Lynn of Lorn • Scarba, Lunga and the Garvellachs • Loch Rannoch & Glen Lyon • Loch Tummel • River Earn (Comrie to St. Fillans) • River Tay (Dunkeld) • Hoy & West Mainland • Shetland • Assynt-Coigach • Ben Nevis and Glen Coe • Cuillin Hills • Dornoch Firth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sperrin • Strangford Lough
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Wessex Downs • Nidderdale • Northumberland Coast • Quantock Hills • Shropshire Hills • Solway Coast • South Devon • Suffolk Coast and Heaths • Surrey Hills • Tamar Valley • Wye Valley (England and Wales) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glen Affric • Glen Strathfarrar • Kintail • Knoydart • Kyle of Tongue • Loch Shiel • Morar, Moidart and Ardnamurchan • North-West Sutherland • Small Isles • Trotternish • Wester Ross • South Lewis, Harris and North Uist • South Uist Machair • St. Kilda • Loch Lomond • The Trossachs • Cairngorm Mountains • Deeside & Lochnagar 		
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	<i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i>			
Landscape: Heritage Coasts (England and Wales)	A Heritage Coast is a section of coast exceeding one mile in length that is of exceptionally fine scenic quality, substantially undeveloped and containing features of special significance and interest. The designation is agreed between local authorities and (in England) Natural England or (in Wales) Natural Resources Wales, as an aid to local authorities in planning and managing their coastlines ¹⁷⁵ .			
	As of November 2024, there are 32 Heritage Coasts located around England ¹⁷⁶ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dover-Folkestone • Durham • East Devon • Exmoor • Flamborough Head • Godrevy – Portreath • Gribbin Head • Hamstead • Hartland (Cornwall) • Hartland (Devon) • Isles Of Scilly 	There are no areas of Heritage Coast in Scotland.	As of November 2022, there are 14 Heritage Coasts located around Wales ¹⁷⁷ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberffraw Bay • Ceredigion Coast • Dinas Head • Glamorgan Coast • Gower • Great Orme • Holyhead Mountain • Llŷn Coast • Marloes and Dale • North Anglesey Coast 	There are no areas of Heritage Coast in Northern Ireland.

¹⁷⁵ Natural England (2015) *Heritage coasts: definition, purpose and Natural England's role*. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heritage-coasts-protecting-undeveloped-coast/heritage-coasts-definition-purpose-and-natural-englands-role>

¹⁷⁶ Natural England (2024) *Heritage Coasts (England)*. Available: [Heritage Coasts \(England\) | Natural England Open Data Geoportal](#)

¹⁷⁷ Natural Resources Wales (2022) *Heritage Coasts*. Available: [Heritage Coasts | DataMapWales](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lundy • North Devon • North Norfolk • North Northumberland • North Yorkshire & Cleveland Hamstead • Pentire - Widemouth • Penwith • Purbeck • Rame Head • South Devon • South Foreland • Spurn • St Agnes • St Bees Head • Suffolk • Sussex • Tennyson • The Lizard • The Roseland • Trevoze Head 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Pembrokeshire • St Bride's Bay • St David's Peninsula • St Dogmaels and Moylgrove 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Dorset 			
	<i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i>			
Landscape: Landscape Character Areas	<p>Landscape Character Areas or Landscape Character Assessments encompass various aspects of landscape, biodiversity, heritage, cultural and geological features. These are non-statutory and used as an aid in the planning process and for decision making.</p> <p>The locations of Landscape Character Areas in Wales are shown in Figure 6B.</p>			
	<p>Natural England has produced National Character Area Profiles (NCAs)¹⁷⁸ which divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries. They can be</p>	<p>Scotland has a digital map-based national Landscape Character Assessment which shows Landscape Character Types and produced a series of 30 regional LCA studies which identify, map and describe the landscape character of all of Scotland¹⁷⁹.</p> <p>A check of the NatureScot's summary in January 2025 shows the most recent information available for Landscape</p>	<p>Natural Resources Wales uses the LANDMAP tool to evaluate landscape characteristics. This includes geological landscape, landscape habitats, visual and sensory, historic landscape and cultural landscape. Although no specific defined Landscape Character Areas are identified, LANDMAP is</p>	<p>The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment subdivides the countryside into 130 Landscape Character Areas, each based upon local patterns of geology, landform, land use, cultural and ecological features¹⁸¹.</p> <p>A check of the DAERA's summary in January 2025 shows the most recent information available for Landscape Character Assessments in Northern</p>

¹⁷⁸ UK Government (2024) *National Character Area profiles*. Available: [National Character Area profiles: information for local decision making - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁷⁹ NatureScot (2023) *Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland*. Available: [Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland | NatureScot](#)

¹⁸¹ Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (2017) *Landscape Character of Northern Ireland*. Available: [Landscape Character of Northern Ireland | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

	<p>used for planning and development.</p> <p>A check of the UK Government's summary in January 2025 shows the most recent information available for National Character Areas' in England with the latest update being in May 2024.</p>	<p>Character Assessments in Scotland with the latest update being in January 2023.</p>	<p>used to inform planning, policy and strategies¹⁸⁰.</p> <p>A check of the Natural Resources Wales' summary in January 2025 shows the most recent information available for LANDMAP in Wales with the latest update being in January 2025</p>	<p>Ireland with the latest update being in October 2016.</p> <p><i>Further detail on the most up to date designated areas can be viewed on the following interactive map:</i></p> <p>https://daerani.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=3fdf82b3e41e44a1bb86a542dfb67d97</p>
	<p><i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i></p>			
<p>Landscape:</p> <p>National Character Areas</p> <p>National Seascape Areas</p>	<p>National Character Areas are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment. National Character Area profiles are guidance documents which can help communities to inform their decision-making about the places that they live in and care for. The information they contain informs the delivery of nature improvement areas and encourage broader partnership working through local nature partnerships.</p> <p>National Seascape Character Areas are also defined to support decision making through the marine planning process. Visual, cultural, historical and archaeological impacts are considered for all coastal areas alongside wider social and economic impacts of development or activity on coastal landscapes and seascapes.</p> <p>The locations of National Character Areas in England are shown in Figure 6A.</p>			

¹⁸⁰ Natural Resources Wales (2021) *LANDMAP – the Welsh landscape baseline*. Available: <https://naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/business-sectors/planning-and-development/evidence-to-inform-development-planning/landmap-the-welsh-landscape-baseline/?lang=en>

The locations of National Seascape Areas in Wales are shown in Figure 6B .				
	<p>See text for Landscape Character Areas</p> <p>In England, four Seascape Character Assessments are published for the north east, north west, south east and south west marine plan areas and comprise marine character areas profiles.¹⁸²</p>	<p>See text for Landscape Character Areas</p> <p>Coastal Character Assessment is defined in Scotland as the process of identifying and describing Scotland's diverse coasts. Thirteen National Coastal Character Types have been identified, most recently the Orkney and north Caithness characterisation added in 2016.¹⁸³</p>	<p>Wales defines 48 National Landscape Character Areas (NLCAs) which highlight what distinguishes one landscape from another, with reference to their regionally distinct natural, cultural and perceptual characteristics.¹⁸⁴</p> <p>Wales identifies National Marine Character Areas which highlight the key natural, cultural and perceptual influences that make the character of each seascape distinct and unique. Wales inshore waters are divided into 29 Marine Character Areas.¹⁸⁵</p>	<p>Northern Ireland provides a strategic overview of the landscape and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique.¹⁸⁶</p> <p>NI defines 24 different regional seascape character areas around the coast which describe the key features and characteristics of each seascape character area.¹⁸⁷</p>

¹⁸² UK Government (2018) *Seascape assessments*. Available: [Seascape assessments for North East, North West, South East, South West marine plan areas \(MMO1134\) - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁸³ NatureScot (2023) *Coastal Character Assessment*. Available: [Coastal Character Assessment | NatureScot](#)

¹⁸⁴ Natural Resources Wales (2023) *National Landscape Character Areas*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / National Landscape Character Areas \(NLCA\)](#)

¹⁸⁵ Natural Resources Wales (2023) *Marine Character Areas*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / Marine Character Areas](#)

¹⁸⁶ DAERA (2019) *Regional Character Assessment*. Available: [NI Regional Landscape Character Assessment - National Grid | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

¹⁸⁷ DAERA (2014) *Seascape Character Areas*. Available: [Seascape Character Areas | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

Tranquillity Tranquil places	Defined as the quality of calm experienced in places with mainly natural features and activities, free from disturbance from manmade ones. Mapping designed to show the level of tranquillity across the UK has been generated, mapping places where and helping Councils to develop national tranquillity policies.			
	In England, The Countryside Charity (CPRE) have derived a national map which identifies most and least tranquil places. ¹⁸⁸	While no tranquillity mapping has been identified Scottish Natural Heritage has focussed on the concepts of ‘wilderness’ and ‘wildlands’ in Scotland with a Policy Statement on Wildness in Scotland’s Countryside and the publication of a map of Wild Land Areas in 2014. ¹⁸⁹	Natural Resources Wales provide map of the land of Wales, graded to show levels of Tranquillity. It results from combining several underlying layers of data, covering different factors that either contribute to tranquillity or detract from tranquillity. Produced to provide a strategic baseline for monitoring change in tranquillity in Wales to inform strategic planning and policy-making. ¹⁹⁰ Additionally the nationally consistent terrestrial Tranquillity & Place resource identifies the strategic and local resource in remote, rural,	There does not appear to be any record of tranquillity mapping having been undertaken in Northern Ireland.

¹⁸⁸ CPRE (2007) *Tranquillity Map: England*. Available: [Tranquillity Map: England - CPRE](#)

¹⁸⁹ NatureScot (2014) *Wild Land Areas map and descriptions*. Available: [Wild Land Areas map and descriptions 2014 | NatureScot](#)

¹⁹⁰ DataMapWales (2017) *Tranquil Areas Wales*. Available: [Tranquil Areas Wales | DataMapWales](#)

			peri-urban and urban areas ¹⁹¹	
Dark Sky Reserves	An IDA International Dark Sky Reserve is a public or private land possessing an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and nocturnal environment that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural, heritage and/or public enjoyment. Reserves consist of a core area meeting minimum criteria for sky quality and natural darkness, and a peripheral area that supports dark sky preservation in the core. Reserves are formed through a partnership of multiple land managers who have recognized the value of the natural night time environment through regulations and long-term planning.			
	<p>The IDA identify the following Dark Sky Reserves in England¹⁹²:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cranborne Chase • Exmoor National Park • Moore's Reserve • North York Moors • Yorkshire Dales National Park 	<p>The IDA do not identify any Dark Sky Reserves in Scotland, however Galloway Forest Park is accredited as an International Dark Sky Park. This is located in southern Scotland in the Dumfries and Galloway council area.¹⁹³</p>	<p>The IDA identify the following Dark Sky Reserves in Wales¹⁹⁴:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brecon Beacons National Park • Snowdonia National Park <p>Dark Skies Map for Wales also shows Wales' light pollution levels and highlights areas with pristine night skies. More than two thirds o Wales</p>	<p>The IDA do not identify any Dark Sky Reserves in Northern Ireland however OM Dark Sky Park is accredited as an International Dark Sky Park. This covers Davagh Forest in the landscape of the Sperrin's.¹⁹⁶</p>

¹⁹¹ DataMapWales (2023) *Tranquillity & Place Sound Environment Part I*. Available: [Tranquillity & Place Sound Environment Part I | DataMapWales](#)

¹⁹² International Dark Sky Association (2025) *Dark Sky Reserves*. Available: [Dark Sky Place finder | DarkSky International](#)

¹⁹³ Forestry and Land Scotland (2023) *Galloway International Dark Sky Park*. Available: [Galloway International Dark Sky Park | Forestry and Land Scotland](#)

¹⁹⁴ International Dark Sky Association (2025) *Dark Sky Reserves*. Available: [Dark Sky Place finder | DarkSky International](#)

¹⁹⁶ OM Dark Sky Park & Observatory (2025) *Davagh Sperrin Mountains*. Available: [OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory | International Dark Sky Park](#)

			falls in to the darkest category. ¹⁹⁵	
Air Quality:	Since December 1997 each local authority in the UK must review and assess air quality in their area to determine performance against national air quality objectives. Where air quality objectives are not likely to be achieved an AQMA must be declared. AQMAs are typically associated with vehicle emissions, principally oxides of nitrogen (NOx), oxides of sulphur (SO ₂) and particulates (PM ₁₀). As such, AQMAs are predominantly associated with urban areas and the road network).			
Location of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's)	The locations of AQMAs are shown in Figures 1A and 1B .			
Air Pollution Information System	The Air Pollution Information System provides a searchable database and information on pollutants and their impacts on habitats and species. The APIS provides pollution impact records for a variety of habitats, ecosystems and species. Each record contains information on key impacts including any critical loads or levels and a full reference list.			
Smoke Control Areas	<p>Additionally, under the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010, the UK undertakes an air quality assessment and reports the findings on an annual basis. The assessment is based on a range of high-quality evidence including measurements from established monitoring networks and supplementary assessment in the form of air quality modelling.¹⁹⁷ This can be viewed by Air Quality Zones for a range of pollutant metrics.¹⁹⁸ Further data on air pollutants can be found on the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) which is made up of the Greenhouse Gas Inventory (GHGI) and the Air Quality Pollutant Inventory (AQPI).¹⁹⁹</p> <p>A check of the DEFRA's map in January 2025 shows the most recent information available for AQMA's in the UK as of December 2024²⁰⁰.</p>			

¹⁹⁵ LUC (2025). *Dark Skies Map for Natural Resources Wales*. Available: [Dark Skies Map for Natural Resources Wales | LUC](#)

¹⁹⁷ Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2025) *Air quality compliance data*. Available: [Air quality compliance data - Defra, UK](#)

¹⁹⁸ Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2025) *Compliance Map*. Available: [UK AIR AQ Compliance Map](#)

¹⁹⁹ National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (2024) *About the Inventory*. Available: [About the inventory | National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory](#)

²⁰⁰ Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2021) *AQMAs interactive map*. Available: [AQMA's interactive map](#)

Smoke control areas are areas where people and businesses must not emit smoke from a chimney or buy or sell unauthorised fuel for use in a smoke control area unless it's used in an 'exempt' fireplace ²⁰¹ . Smoke control areas are designated across the UK, with varying details available for each nation.				
	There were 462 AQMAs in England. AQMAs are distributed throughout England, although they are principally located in areas of high population. The largest AQMAs are within major cities, including London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield and Bristol. A significant amount of AQMAs are designated along major trunk roads and are generally associated with areas of high congestion.	There were 29 AQMAs in Scotland Error! Bookmark not defined. The majority of these are located in the south of the country and are associated with the larger cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Perth and Dundee. Outside of these areas, Aberdeen and Inverness, on the east coast, have designated AQMAs. The north, highlands and west coast do not have any AQMAs.	There were 44 AQMAs in Wales. These are all located in the south of the country. The largest AQMAs are within Swansea and Port Talbot, on the south coast. Smaller AQMAs are within Cardiff, Newport and the smaller towns within the valleys between the M4 corridor and the Brecon Beacons. These small AQMAs are associated with congestion within the town centres.	There were 19 AQMAs in Northern Ireland. These are located in the east, west south and central regions. The urban areas of Belfast in the east, Newry in the south and Strabane in the west have the largest AQMAs. Smaller AQMAs, associated with congestion in town centres, are located throughout east, west and south Northern Ireland. As the NPS applies to England & Wales only, it is anticipated that there are no implications for the air quality of Northern Ireland in terms of AQMA as these have been declared for the most part in relation to the

²⁰¹ DataMapWales (2024) *Wales Smoke Control Areas Map*. Available: [Wales Smoke Control Areas Map | DataMapWales](#)

				impact of emissions from road traffic.
	<p><i>Supporting Trend Data:</i></p> <p>The quality of our air in the UK has improved considerably over the last decade. Road transport is a key source of many air pollutants, particularly in urban areas. Roadside nitrogen dioxide levels for example, have decreased from 40.6 µg/m³ in 2012 to 23.7 µg/m³ in 2023²⁰². There are two main trends in the transport sector working in opposite directions: new vehicles are becoming individually cleaner in response to European emission standards legislation, but total vehicle kilometres are increasing. Overall emissions of key air pollutants from road transport have fallen by about 50% over the last decade, despite increases in traffic, and are expected to reduce by a further 25% over the next decade. This is mainly a result of progressively tighter vehicle emission and fuel standards agreed at European level and set in UK regulations²⁰³.</p>			
Soils, Geology, and Land Use: Location of Geological SSSIs / ASSIs	<i>Geological SSSIs / ASSIs are included within the SSSI / ASSI information provided in Biodiversity and Ecology.</i>			
Soils, Geology, and Land Use:	Maps delineating soil types across respective regions have been published and draw from survey work and GIS techniques. In respect of the England and Wales resource the maps include soilscape, developed from the more detailed national soil map and a series of thematic soil properties including carbon, metal binding capacity and native woodland models.			

²⁰² Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (2024) *Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report*. Available: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera>

²⁰³ Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (2011) *The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - Volume 1*. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-air-quality-strategy-for-england-scotland-wales-and-northern-ireland-volume-1>

National Soil Maps	<p>The maps are developed with the purpose of effectively communicating a general understanding of the variations that occur between soil types and how soils affect the environment.</p> <p>Soil Maps are shown in Figures 8A and 8B.</p>			
	<p>NATMAP (National Soil Map) is derived from the National Soil Map for England and Wales and is the product of sixty years of soil survey work in England and Wales.²⁰⁴</p>	<p>National coverage of the main soil types across Scotland mapped originally at 1:250 000 scale a National Soil Map of Scotland is based on data collected between 1947 and 1981.²⁰⁵</p>	<p>NATMAP (National Soil Map) is derived from the National Soil Map for England and Wales and is the product of sixty years of soil survey work in England and Wales.</p>	<p>The World Reference Base map shows the locations of the nine reference soil groups recognised in Northern Ireland. It is derived from the general soil map of Northern Ireland at 1:250 000 scale, held by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI).²⁰⁶</p>
<p>Soils, Geology, and Land Use:</p> <p>Contaminated Land</p>	<p>Of particular note across England and Wales are the numerous contaminated sites that are a legacy of current or past industrial activities. Typically, contaminated land would be found in urban areas and along major transport links, though many sites are also found in rural or coastal areas. While many sites are known, it is the case that many contaminated sites (their location and the nature of contamination) remain unknown. In England, arsenic, lead and benzo(a)pyrene are the most common substances causing contamination of land identified under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990²⁰⁷.</p>			

²⁰⁴ LandIS (2005) National Soil Map of England and Wales. Available: [LandIS - Land Information System - National Soil Map - NATMAP Soilscales](#)

²⁰⁵ Scotland's Soils (1982) National Soil Map of Scotland. Available: [National soil map of Scotland | Scotland's soils](#)

²⁰⁶ AFBI (n.d.) Soil maps and soil surveys. Available: [Soil maps and soil survey | Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute](#)

²⁰⁷ Environment Agency (2016) Dealing with contaminated land in England. Available: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/513158/State_of_contaminated_land_report.pdf

	<p>Across the United Kingdom, land is legally defined as ‘contaminated land’ where substances are causing or could cause²⁰⁸:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant harm to people, property or protected species • Significant pollution of surface waters or groundwater • Harm to people as a result of radioactivity <p>Some types of contaminated land are classed as ‘special sites’. This includes land that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seriously affects drinking waters, surface waters or important groundwater sources • has been, or is being, used for certain industrial activities, such as oil refining or making explosives • is being or has been regulated using a permit issued under the integrated pollution control or pollution prevention and control regimes • has been used to get rid of waste acid tars • is owned or occupied by the Ministry of Defence • is contaminated by radioactivity • is a nuclear site <p>Determination of contaminated land is made in the UK by a local council or the relevant environment agency and is best identified on a local or regional basis. It is however important to note that there will be lots of brownfield sites which are contaminated and require remediation but have not been formally designated. They will have not been assessed for designation or don’t meet the threshold for designation but still pose a risk of pollution and harm.</p> <p>Local authorities maintain the Public Registers for the ordinary contaminated land in their area.</p>
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²⁰⁸ UK Government (2024) *Land Contamination: technical guidance*. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/contaminated-land>

Soils, Geology, and Land Use: Geoparks	Geoparks are endorsed by UNESCO and are not designated under legislation. They are locally led partnerships within areas of internationally significant geology that work to support sustainable economic development of the area, primarily through geological and eco-tourism ²⁰⁹ . <i>NB: No mapping data on Geoparks is available.</i> A check of the UNESCO's list in January 2025 shows the most recent information available for Geoparks in the UK.			
	There are currently three Geoparks in England, the English Riviera, located in the south of Devon in the south west, the North Pennines, between Cumbria and Northumberland in the north, and the Black Country located in the Midlands.	There are currently two Geoparks in Scotland, the North West Highlands, located in the north, and Geopark Shetland, within the Shetland Islands.	There are currently two Geoparks in Wales, Fforest Fawr, located in the Brecon Beacons in the south, and GeoMôn, which encompasses the island of Anglesey in the north west	There is currently one Geopark in Northern Ireland, the Cuilcagh Lakelands Geopark, straddling the border between Co. Fermanagh in Northern Ireland and Co. Cavan in the Republic of Ireland.
	<i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i>			
Soils, Geology, and Land Use:	The Agricultural Land Classification system is used to assess the quality of land for agricultural use, particularly in England and Wales ²¹⁰ . It classifies land into five grades, with Grade 3 subdivided into Sub-grades 3a and 3b. The best and most versatile agricultural land is defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system ²¹¹ . There are also maps available that show the likelihood of 'best and most versatile agricultural land' at the following link:			

²⁰⁹ United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO (2021) Global Geoparks. Available: <http://www.unesco.org.uk/designation/geoparks/>

²¹⁰ DataMapWales (2019) Predictive Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Map 2. Available: https://datamap.gov.wales/layers/inspire-wg:wg_predictive_alc2

²¹¹ Natural England (2024) *Provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) England*. Available: https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/5d2477d8d04b41d4bb9a8742f858f4d_0/explore?location=52.528521%2C-1.477739%2C8.61

<p>Agricultural Land Classification</p> <p>Main Peatlands</p>	<p>https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5208993007403008</p> <p>In Scotland, the ‘land capability for agriculture’ is a national method used to provide information on the on the types of crops that may be grown in different areas dependent on environmental and soil characteristics. It classifies land into 14 different categories, ranging from classes 1-7 and urban. Classes 1 to 3.1 are known as prime agricultural land²¹².</p> <p>There is currently no classification system in place in Northern Ireland, however information on farmlands and grasslands can be found at the following link:</p> <p>https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/farmlands-and-grasslands</p> <p>Peatlands cover approximately 10% of the UK land area, which constitutes nearly three million hectares of land. The location of the main areas and further information on the types, condition and policy regarding peatlands for the UK can be found at the following link:</p> <p>https://www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org/about-peatlands/uk-peatlands</p>
	<p><i>Supporting trend data is not available.</i></p>
<p>Water Quality and Resources:</p> <p>Water Framework Directive (WFD)</p>	<p>The EU WFD is transposed into UK law through the following regulations: The Water Environment (WFD) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 for England and Wales; the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (WEWS Act); and The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 and The Water (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 for Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The purpose of the Directive is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters (rivers and lakes), transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater. Groundwater is an important natural resource that supports river flows as well as ecological diversity in rivers, lakes and wetlands. It is also available for use, across the United Kingdom, for water supply by abstraction from boreholes, wells and springs.</p>

²¹² Scotland’s soils (2024) National Scale Land Capability for Agriculture. Available: <https://soils.environment.gov.scot/maps/capability-maps/national-scale-land-capability-for-agriculture/>

<p>All EU member states aim to ensure that all aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands reach ‘good’ chemical and ecological status by 2027.</p> <p>The WFD specifies the quality elements that can be used to assess the surface water status of a water body. Quality elements can be biological (e.g. fish, invertebrates, plants), chemical (e.g. heavy metals, pesticides, nutrients) or indicators of the condition of the habitats and water flows and levels (e.g. presence of barriers to fish migration, modelled lake level data) (JNCC 2010).</p> <p>Note will also be made in the AoS of each site of the terms of the Environmental Permitting Regulations (England and Wales) 2018.²¹³</p> <p>A check of the JNCC’s list in January 2025 shows the most recent information available for quality of water bodies assessed under the Water Framework Directive in the UK.</p>				
<p>As of 2022, in England, the quality status of water bodies assessed under the WFD were:</p> <p>Lakes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High – 0%• Good – 14%• Moderate – 74%• Poor – 11%• Bad – 1% <p>Rivers and Canals:</p>		<p>As of 2022, in Scotland, the quality status of water bodies assessed under the WFD were:</p> <p>Lakes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High – 31%• Good – 39%• Moderate – 20%• Poor – 10%• Bad – 0% <p>Rivers and Canals:</p>		<p>As of 2022, in Wales, the quality status of water bodies assessed under the WFD were:</p> <p>Lakes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High – 1%• Good – 18%• Moderate – 65%• Poor – 15%• Bad – 2% <p>Rivers and Canals:</p>
<p>As of 2022, in Northern Ireland, the quality status of water bodies assessed under the WFD were:</p> <p>Lakes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High – 0%• Good – 14%• Moderate – 38%• Poor – 29%• Bad – 19% <p>Rivers and Canals:</p>				

²¹³ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2024) B7. Surface Water Status. Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4250>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High – 0% • Good – 16% • Moderate – 62% • Poor – 19% • Bad – 3% <p>Estuaries and Coastal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High – 0% • Good – 29% • Moderate – 65% • Poor – 3% • Bad – 3% <p>As of 2019, in England, the quality status of groundwater bodies assessed under the WFD were²¹⁴:</p> <p>Quantitative Status:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High – 8% • Good – 48% • Moderate – 27% • Poor – 14% • Bad – 3% <p>Estuaries and Coastal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High – 30% • Good – 68% • Moderate – 1% • Poor – 0% • Bad – 0% <p>As of 2023, in Scotland, the quality status of groundwater bodies assessed under the WFD were²¹⁵:</p> <p>Overall Status:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High – 0% • Good – 44% • Moderate – 47% • Poor – 8% • Bad – 1% <p>Estuaries and Coastal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High – 2% • Good – 20% • Moderate – 75% • Poor – 4% • Bad – 0% <p>As of 2021, in Wales, the quality status of groundwater bodies assessed under the WFD were²¹⁶:</p> <p>Quantitative Status:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High – 0% • Good – 31% • Moderate – 57% • Poor – 11% • Bad – 1% <p>Estuaries and Coastal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High – 0% • Good – 40% • Moderate – 56% • Poor – 4% • Bad – 0% <p>As of 2020, in Northern Ireland, the quality status of groundwater bodies assessed under the WFD were²¹⁷:</p> <p>Overall Status:</p>
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²¹⁴ Environment Agency (2023) *Classifications data for England*. Available: [Classifications data for England | Catchment Data Explorer](#)

²¹⁵ SEPA (n.d.) *Water Classification Hub*. Available: [Water Classification Hub](#)

²¹⁶ Natural Resources Wales (2024) *The state of our groundwater in Wales – why we monitor it and what it is telling us about groundwater levels*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / The state of our groundwater in Wales – why we monitor it and what it is telling us about groundwater levels](#)

²¹⁷ DAERA (2021) Northern Ireland Water Framework Directive Groundwater Status Update 2020. Available: [Northern Ireland Water Framework Directive Groundwater Update 2020.pdf](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good - 73% • Poor – 27% <p>Chemical Status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good – 45% • Poor – 55% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good - 90% • Poor – 10% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good - 100% • Poor – 0% <p>Chemical Status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good – 56% • Poor – 44% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good - 84% • Poor – 16%
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>There has been little change in the overall number of surface water bodies in the UK that achieved high or good ecological status since the indicator was first prepared in 2009, and similarly, there has been little change in the short term, between 2017 and 2022. In 2022, 36% of surface water bodies were assessed under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) as being in high or good status, the same as in 2009 and one percentage point higher than the figure of 35% reported in 2017²¹⁸.</p>			
<p>Water Quality and Resources</p> <p>River Basin Management Plans</p>	<p>River basin management plans (RBMPs) set out how organisations, stakeholders and communities will work together to improve the water environment. A RBD covers an entire river system, including river, lake, groundwater, estuarine and coastal water bodies. RBD RBMPs are designed to protect and improve the quality of the water environment. Good quality water is essential for wildlife, agriculture and businesses to thrive. It boosts regeneration (both structural and economic), recreation and tourism.</p>			
	As of January 2024, the Environment Agency manages the seven RBDs in England covering the Anglian, Humber, Northumbria,	The Scottish Environment Protection Agency manage the Scotland RBD. Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the Environment Agency jointly	Natural Resources Wales manage the Western Wales RBD. Natural Resources Wales and the Environment Agency jointly	In 2015 the second set of River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) as required by the regulations were published for each River Basin District within

²¹⁸ JNCC (2023) B7. *Surface water status*. Available: [UKBI - B7. Surface water status | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

	<p>North West, South East, South West and Thames river basin districts and jointly manages the Solway Tweed RBD and the Dee and Severn RBDs. The Environment Agency must review and update RBMPs every 6 years, with the most recent update in 2022²¹⁹. Implementation of these plans is purported to enhance nature and the natural water assets of the river basin districts that are the foundation of everyone's wealth, health and wellbeing, and the things people value, including culture and wildlife.</p>	<p>manage the Solway Tweed RBD.</p> <p>In December 2021 SEPA published the River Basin Management Plan for Scotland 2021-2027²²⁰. The plan sets out a range of actions to address significant problems affecting water quality, physical condition, water resources and the migration of wild fish. It focuses on reducing resource use, eliminating waste and restoration of natural capital.</p>	<p>manage the Dee and Severn RBDs.</p> <p>In Wales RBMPs are updated on a six yearly cycle and are prepared in consultation with a wide range of organisations and individuals. The Western Wales and River Dee RBMPs 2021-2027 summaries were published in July 2022²²¹ after a check in January 2025.</p>	<p>Northern Ireland for 2015 - 2021. These cover the North Eastern, North Western and Neagh Bann River basin districts.²²² The Plans identified where the water environment is in good or excellent condition and set out objectives for improvement or prevention of deterioration. Consultation on the Draft third cycle River Basin Management Plan for Northern Ireland 2021 – 2027 took place in 2021.²²³</p>
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²¹⁹ Environment Agency (2024) *River basin management plans: updated 2022*. Available: [River basin management plans: updated 2022 - GOV.UK](#)

²²⁰ SEPA (2021) *The River Basin Management Plan for Scotland 2021 – 2027*. Available: [211222-final-rbmp3-scotland.pdf](#)

²²¹ Natural Resources Wales (2024) *Dee and Western Wales river basin management plans 2021-2027*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / Dee and Western Wales river basin management plans 2021-2027](#)

²²² DAERA (2015) *River Basin Management*. Available: [River Basin Management | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

²²³ DAERA (2019) *River Basin Planning 3rd Cycle Timeline Consultation*. Available: [River Basin Planning 3rd Cycle Timeline Consultation | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

<p>Water Quality and Resources</p> <p>Eutrophication of marine waters</p>	<p>The majority of UK waters do not experience significant eutrophication – the eutrophication problems are restricted to a small number of areas in coastal waters, primarily estuaries and embayments with restricted water circulation. In a limited number of areas on the north east and southern coasts of the UK and on the south-west coasts of England and Wales and in Northern Ireland, inputs of nutrients of anthropogenic origin (notably nitrate and phosphate from agriculture and urban waste water sources) have resulted in nutrient enrichment in some small estuaries and bays. In general, changes in nitrogen and phosphorus inputs, concentrations of contaminants, chlorophyll concentrations and oxygen levels show improvements. Where measures have been taken to reduce nutrient inputs, it may take a long time to result in the desired outcome due to time lags between taking measures and change in the large reservoirs of nitrogen that have built up in soils and ground-waters in previous decades. However the existing programmes for assessing the eutrophication status for coastal and marine waters developed under the WFD and the OSPAR Convention have to a large extent already been applied successfully with the UK largely achieving GES in the latest 2018 assessment²²⁴.</p>
<p>Water Quality and Resources</p> <p>Hazardous substances</p>	<p>The UK has largely achieved its aim of Good Environmental Status for contaminants. The updated assessment of achieving GES with respect to descriptor 8 (Defra 2019) indicates that concentrations of hazardous substances in the Celtic Seas and the Greater North Sea and their biological effects are generally meeting agreed target thresholds which means they are at levels that should not cause harm to sea life (89% for contaminant concentrations and 96% for biological effects)²²⁵.</p> <p>Highly persistent legacy chemicals are the cause of the few failures, mainly in coastal waters close to polluted sources. Heavy metals (mercury, cadmium, and lead), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), organotins and synthetic substances such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) are routinely measured for OSPAR. Measurements focus on marine sediments and on organisms in which these contaminants tend to accumulate or through which they biomagnify up the food chain. Contaminant concentrations have continued to decrease in the majority of areas assessed within the OSPAR area. Although concentrations are generally below levels likely to harm marine species, they mostly have not yet reduced to background levels.</p>

²²⁴ UKMMAS (2018) *Eutrophication*. Available: [Eutrophication - Marine online assessment tool](#)

²²⁵ Defra (2019) Marine Strategy Part One: UK updated assessment and Good Environmental Status. Available: [Marine Strategy Part One: UK updated assessment and Good Environmental Status](#)

	Concerns remain in some localised areas with respect to high levels of mercury, lead, and certain PCB compounds and locally increasing concentrations of PAHs and cadmium in open waters ²²⁶ :			
Water Quality and Resources: Bathing Water Quality	The Bathing Water Directive (76/160/EEC) is to protect public health and the environment. The Directive sets a number of microbiological and physico-chemical standards that bathing waters must either comply with ('mandatory' standards) or endeavour to meet ('guideline' standards). The Bathing Water Directive is transposed into law in all of the United Kingdom's devolved nations and is administered in England by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in Scotland by the Scottish Government, in Wales by Natural Resources Wales and in Northern Ireland by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.			
	Water quality at designated bathing water sites in England is assessed by the Environment Agency. From May to September, weekly assessments measure current water quality, and at a number of sites daily pollution risk forecasts are issued. Annual ratings classify each site as excellent, good, sufficient or poor based on measurements taken over a period of up to four years.			
	As of January 2025, in England, the quality status of bathing water areas assessed under the Bathing Waters Directive were ²²⁷ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent – 289 • Good – 95 • Sufficient – 29 	As of November 2024, there were 89 designated bathing waters in Scotland. The quality status of bathing water areas assessed under the Bathing Waters Directive were ²²⁸ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent – 50 	As of December 2024, in Wales, 109 designated bathing waters were sampled and classified during the 2023 bathing season. The quality status of bathing water areas assessed under the Bathing Waters Directive were ²²⁹ :	As of October 2024, in Northern Ireland, all 26 monitored coastal bathing waters were classified overall as reaching minimum standards during the 2024 annual classification. The quality status of bathing water areas assessed under the

²²⁶ OSPAR (2017) *Contaminant concentrations are decreasing, but concerns remain*. Available: [Contaminant concentrations are decreasing, but concerns remain - OSPAR-OAP \(Prod\)](#)

²²⁷ Environment Agency (2024) *Bathing Water Data*. Available: [Bathing waters data](#)

²²⁸ Scottish Environment Protection Agency (2024) *Record number of Excellent Bathing Waters in Scotland for 2025*. Available: [Record number of Excellent Bathing Waters in Scotland for 2025 | Beta | SEPA | Scottish Environment Protection Agency](#)

²²⁹ Natural Resources Wales (2024) *Wales bathing water report 2023*. Available: [Wales bathing water report 2023](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor – 37 • Closed - 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good – 27 • Sufficient – 9 • Poor – 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent – 80 • Good – 20 • Sufficient – 7 • Poor – 2 <p>All of the designated bathing waters met the minimum water quality standards and there were no non-compliant bathing waters during the 2019 season.</p>	<p>Bathing Waters Directive were²³⁰:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent – 22 • Good – 2 • Sufficient – 2 • Poor – 0
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>2015 was the first year of implementing the new classification system for bathing water quality. The results of these are not directly comparable to years prior to this. In general, there has been improvements in bathing water quality since recording began in 1988.</p>			
<p>Water Quality and Resources:</p> <p>Groundwater Source Protection Zones</p>	<p>Source Protection Zones²³¹ show the level of risk to a drinking water supply from pollution. Sources include wells, boreholes and springs. In England, the Environment Agency must protect groundwater sources used to supply drinking water from pollution. Groundwater in a SPZ1 is most vulnerable to pollution given the close proximity of the abstraction point and the water's intended use for human consumption.</p>			

²³⁰ NI Direct (2024) *Bathing water quality*. Available: [Bathing water quality | nidirect](#)

²³¹ Environment Agency (2024) *Groundwater source protection zones (SPZs)*. Available: [Groundwater source protection zones \(SPZs\) - GOV.UK](#)

<p>Water Quality and Resources:</p> <p>Drinking Water Protected Areas (DWPA's)</p>	<p>All groundwater bodies in England are designated as drinking water protected areas (DrWPAs). This aims to protect groundwater from over-abstraction and to prevent deterioration in groundwater quality that could increase the treatment of drinking water. The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 Article 8 requires Drinking Water Protected Areas to be identified (or including those that could have such use in the future) and have measures in place that aim to reduce treatment of drinking water within DrWPA.</p>
<p>Flood Risk and Coastal Change:</p> <p>Location of Fluvial and Tidal Floodplains</p>	<p>In England²³² and Wales^{233 234}, the flood risk (river and tidal) is categorised into three zones for planning purposes (noting that the NPPF further subdivides flood zone 3 into 3a and Functional Floodplain 3b (land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood)):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Zone 1 – Locations in flood zone 1 have a low probability of flooding. This means in any year land has a less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. • Flood Zone 2 – Locations in flood zone 2 have a medium probability of flooding. This means in any year land has between a 1% and 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers and between a 0.5% and 0.1% chance of flooding from the sea. • Flood Zone 3 – Locations in flood zone 3 have a high probability of flooding. This means in any year land has a 1% or more chance of flooding from rivers, or a 0.5% or more chance of flooding from the sea. <p>The risk of surface water flooding also needs to be considered²³⁵:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High - each year, the area has a chance of flooding of greater than 1 in 30 (3.3%) • Medium - each year, the area has a chance of flooding of between 1 in 100 (1%) and 1 in 30 (3.3%) • Low - each year, the area has a chance of flooding of between 1 in 1000 (0.1%) and 1 in 100 (1%)

²³² Environment Agency (2021) *Flood zones and what they mean*. Available: [Your results explained - Flood map for planning - GOV.UK](#)

²³³ Natural Resources Wales (2021) *Flood zones*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / Flood zones](#)

²³⁴ Natural Resources Wales (2025) *Flood map for planning / development advice map*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / Flood map for planning / development advice map](#)

²³⁵ Environment Agency (2013) *Flood risk maps for surface water: how to use the map*. Available: [Flood risk maps for surface water: how to use the map - GOV.UK](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very low - each year, the area has a chance of flooding of less than 1 in 1000 (0.1%) <p>The TAN15 Defended Zone in Wales are defined as areas that benefit from Risk Management Authority flood defences with the following minimum Standard of Protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 100 years (present day) for rivers • 1 in 200 years (present day) for the sea <p>For flood defences built from 2016 onwards there must be an allowance for climate change and design freeboard.</p> <p>For planning purposes, surface water and small watercourses are categorised differently in Wales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Water and Small Watercourses – Flood Zone 2 Areas with 0.1% to 1% (1 in 1000 to 1 in 100) chance of flooding from surface water and/or small watercourses in a given year, including the effects of climate change • Surface Water and Small Watercourses – Flood Zone 3 Areas with more than 1% (1 in 100) chance of flooding from surface water and/or small watercourses in a given year, including the effects of climate change <p>In Scotland, the flood risk (river, tidal and surface water) is categorised into three areas²³⁶:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no risk area (less than 0.1% (1:1000)) chance of flooding. • Low to medium risk area (0.1% to 0.5% (1:1000 – 1:200)) chance of flooding. • Medium to high risk area (0.5% (1:200)) or greater chance of flooding. <p>The Northern Ireland Flood Risk Assessment Plan (NIFRA) 2018, identified a total of 45 flood risk areas. Out of these, 12 have been identified as Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk (APSFR) and a further 9 determined Transitional Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk (TAPSFR)²³⁷.</p>
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²³⁶ Scottish Government (2020) *Scottish Planning Policy, A Natural, Resilient Place*. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-planning-policy/pages/7/>

²³⁷ Department for Infrastructure (2018) *Northern Ireland Flood Risk Assessment (NIFRA) 2018*. Available: <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/infrastructure/northern-ireland-flood-risk-assessment-report-2018-updated-may2019.pdf>

Estimates of flood risk from different sources across the UK vary, but it is known that the level of risk is substantial – for example in Wales, over 105,000 properties are at risk of flooding from rivers and over 90,000 from the sea, with approximately 143,000 properties in Wales at risk of surface water flooding (in addition to potentially other flood risks)²³⁸. In Scotland, over 280,000 properties are currently estimated to be at risk of flooding²³⁹, England has approximately 2,780,400 properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea and 3,423,400 from properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water²⁴⁰. NIFRA 2018 estimated that 45,000 properties in Northern Ireland are at risk of flooding.

Shoreline Management Plans have been developed across England and Wales by Coastal Groups made up of members from local councils and the Environment Agency. The purpose of these plans is to identify the most sustainable approach to managing the flood and coastal erosion risks to the coastline in the:

- Short term (0 to 20 years)
- Medium term (20 to 50 years)
- Long term (50 to 100 years)

A total of 22 plans have been developed for England and Wales as follows²⁴¹:

- SMP 1 – Scottish Border to River Tyne
- SMP 2 – The Tyne to Flamborough Head
- SMP 3 – Flamborough Head to Gibraltar Point
- SMP 4 – Gibraltar Point to Hunstanton
- SMP 5 – Hunstanton to Kelling hard
- SMP 6 – Kelling Hard to Lowestoft

²³⁸ Welsh Government (2019) *Properties at Risk of Flooding in Wales*. Available: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Environment-and-Countryside/Flooding>

²³⁹ Scottish Government (2019) *Living with flooding: action plan*. Available: [Living with flooding: action plan - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/living-with-flooding/action-plan/pages/1-1-introduction.aspx)

²⁴⁰ Environment Agency (2024) *Flood and coastal erosion risk management report: 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023*. Available: [Flood and coastal erosion risk management report: 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-report-1-april-2022-to-31-march-2023)

²⁴¹ Environment Agency (2009) *Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs)*. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shoreline-management-plans-smps>

- SMP 7 – Lowestoft to Felixstowe
- SMP 8 – Essex and South Suffolk
- SMP 9 – River Medway and Swale Estuary
- SMP 10 – Isle of Grain to South Foreland
- SMP 11 – South Foreland to Beachy Head
- SMP 12 – Beachy Head to Selsey Bill
- SMP 13 – Selsey Bill to Hurst Spit
- SMP 14 – Isle of Wight
- SMP 15 – Hurst Spit to Durlston Head
- SMP 16 – Durlston Head to Rame Head
- SMP 17 – Rame Head to Hartland Point
- SMP 18 – Hartland Point to Anchor Head
- SMP 19 – Anchor Head to Lavernock Point
- SMP 20 – Lavernock Head to Saint Ann’s Head
- SMP 21 – St. Ann’s Head to Great Ormes Head
- SMP 22 – Great Ormes Head to Scotland

The Shoreline Management Plans propose four different management policies:

- No active intervention
- Hold the (existing defence) line
- Managed realignment
- Advance the line

<p>There is not the same comprehensive approach to Shoreline Management in Scotland, with only a small number (four) of local authorities publishing Shoreline Management Plans, though there is a growing recognition of the need for a more joined up approach to this issue, particularly in light of a changing climate and recent work has informed this process²⁴². Northern Ireland also does not have a strategic approach to shoreline management²⁴³.</p>				
	<p>England has approximately 2.8 million properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea and 3.4 million properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water²⁴⁴. Flood Zones 2 and 3 and located across the whole of England associated with river and coastal areas. Lowland areas are of particular risk as a consequence of floodplains being</p>	<p>In Scotland, over 280,000 properties are currently estimated to be at risk of flooding²⁴⁶.</p>	<p>Flood zones 2 and 3 are located across the whole of Wales. The largest and most extensive of these areas exist in lowland and estuarine regions, such as the River Dee and Severn estuary. Mid Wales and the highland regions, such as Snowdonia and the Brecon Beacons, have less risk of flooding²⁴⁸.</p>	<p>There are Significant Flood Risk Areas throughout Northern Ireland, for which detailed mapping is available. The largest of these are located around centres of population, such as Belfast in the east and Londonderry in the west.</p>
		<p>Just below 3.6% of all data zones classified as having an extremely high or acute vulnerability to flooding, affecting an estimated 100,000 people²⁴⁷. Over 60,000 people may be extremely or acutely disadvantaged in relation to river (fluvial) flooding, over 28,000 people may be extremely or acutely disadvantaged in relation</p>		<p>NB: Other areas of Northern Ireland are likely to be at risk of flooding, although these are not as extensively mapped/assessed due to Significant Flood Risk Areas being allocated on</p>

²⁴² Dynamic Coasts (2017) *National Coastal Change Assessment*. Available: <http://www.dynamiccoast.com/outputs.html>

²⁴³ Northern Ireland Assembly (2015) *Shoreline management planning in Northern Ireland*. Available: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/knowledge_exchange/briefing_papers/series4/2015-04-15-kess-shoreline-management-planning-in-northern-ireland1.pdf

²⁴⁴ Environment Agency (2024) *Flood and coastal erosion risk management report: 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023*. Available: [Flood and coastal erosion risk management report: 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/123456/flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-report-1-april-2022-to-31-march-2023.pdf)

²⁴⁶ Scottish Government (2019) *Living with flooding: action plan*. Available: [Living with flooding: action plan - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/living-with-flooding-action-plan/pages/10/#:~:text=The%20investigation%20into%20the%20flood,change)%2C%20with%20a%20minor%20number)

²⁴⁷ Scottish Government (2015) *Mapping flood disadvantage in Scotland 2015: report*. Available: [https://www.gov.scot/publications/mapping-flood-disadvantage-scotland-2015-main-report/pages/10/#:~:text=The%20investigation%20into%20the%20flood,change\)%2C%20with%20a%20minor%20number](https://www.gov.scot/publications/mapping-flood-disadvantage-scotland-2015-main-report/pages/10/#:~:text=The%20investigation%20into%20the%20flood,change)%2C%20with%20a%20minor%20number)

²⁴⁸ Natural Resources Wales (2020) *Flood risk map*. Available: [Natural Resources Wales / Check your flood risk by postcode](https://www.naturalresources.wales/flood-risk-map)

	associated with the lower reaches of rivers ²⁴⁵ .	to coastal flooding, and 14,000 people in regard to surface water flooding.		the basis of population density ²⁴⁹
	<p>Supporting Trend Data:</p> <p>As a consequence of climate change (which could lead to increased rainfall, river flows, and higher coastal storm surges), and development pressures, it is likely that flood risk will increase in the future, with potentially the most significant changes likely to happen in the latter half of the century. In England it is estimated that Without any further investment in flood defences, the number of properties at medium or high risk could rise from 0.75 million to 1.29 million in 50 years²⁵⁰. Similar increase are likely to occur within Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.</p>			
Marine Spatial Plans	<p>Marine planning in the UK has been taking place across different timescales. The first marine plans to be adopted in the UK were the East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans in 2014 and the Scottish National Marine Plan in 2015, followed by the South Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans in 2018 and the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP) in 2019. The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) continue to develop the remaining plans for areas of English waters and the waters of Northern Ireland respectively. In England, all Marine Plans have been adopted. The consultation on the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland took place in 2018, but a final plan is yet to be adopted. DAERA published a revised Statement of Public Participation in October 2022, which sets out how and when stakeholders can be involved in the Marine Plan process. The remaining plans, like those already adopted, are consistent with the Marine Policy Statement, and have taken a similar approach, presentation (comprising a vision, objectives and general and sectoral policies) and in the approach to policy wording. Marine plans in the UK have, to date, been written at a strategic level which largely consolidates and clarifies existing legal and policy arrangements, albeit with a regional focus, and in most instances do not attempt to be spatially explicit, for example by indicating defined zones for development or where development would be precluded. The plans rather identify potential resource and constraint (including through mapping), with policies that seek to balance environment, economic and social considerations in decision making and consent application. This includes the promotion of certain activities such as offshore wind, or the safeguarding</p>			

²⁴⁵ Environment Agency (2017) *Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)*. Available: <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/37837.aspx>

²⁴⁹ Department for Infrastructure (2024) *Flood Maps NI*. Available: [Flood Maps NI | Department for Infrastructure](#)

²⁵⁰ HM Government (2018) *A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment*. Available: [25-year-environment-plan.pdf](#)

	of strategic resources. As these are the first iteration of marine plans, subsequent revisions may be expected to be more explicit ²⁵¹ .
Resources and Waste	<p>The UK generated 191.2 million tonnes of total waste in 2020, and it is estimated that 40.4 million tonnes of this was commercial and industrial (C&I) waste²⁵².</p> <p>In 2022, 25,691,000 tonnes of Waste from Households (WfH) were generated in the UK with an overall recycling rate of 44.1%. In England, the recycling rate was 43.4%, in Northern Ireland it was 49.2%, in Wales it was 56.9% and in Scotland it was 42.1%. Around 6.3 million tonnes of the UK's municipal waste went to landfill in 2022.</p> <p>Total UK commercial and industrial waste, comprising inert, non-hazardous arising which result from trade or businesses, was 40.4 million tonnes in 2020. Around 33.7 million tonnes (83%) of this total was generated in England. This was split between the commercial and industrial sectors by 24.3 and 9.4 million tonnes respectively.</p> <p>Construction, demolition and excavation (CD&E; including dredging) generated around three fifths (62%) of total UK waste in 2016. 66.2 million tonnes of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste was produced in the UK in 2018, 91% (60.2 million tonnes) of which was recovered. This recovery rate is broadly similar over the period 2010 – 2014. The Waste Framework Directive targets a 70% recovery rate for non-hazardous construction and demolition waste by 2020, which the UK is expected to achieve at these given ratesError! Bookmark not defined..</p>

²⁵¹ Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2021) UK Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment. Available: [UK Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment - scoping](#)

²⁵² Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2024) UK Statistics on Waste. Available: [UK statistics on waste - GOV.UK](#)

Appendix E. Baseline maps

Please note that a series of maps have been developed to help inform the understanding of baseline information. Due to file size, this Appendix is provided as a separate Volume.

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