

DIRECTION GIVEN BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE UNDER SECTION 35(1) OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008 (AS AMENDED) RELATING TO THE SUFFOLK WATER RECYCLING, TRANSFER AND STORAGE PROJECT

1. By an emailed letter to the Secretary of State received on 26 August 2025 ("**the Request**"), Northumbrian Water Limited (trading as Essex and Suffolk Water Limited) ("**the Applicant**") formally requested that the Secretary of State exercise the power vested in the Secretary of State under section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) ("**the Planning Act**") to direct that the Principal Development of the proposed Suffolk Water Recycling, Transfer and Storage project ("**the Project**") be treated as development for which development consent is required.
2. The Secretary of State notes that the principal elements of the Project (the "Principal Development") comprise the following:
 - An Advanced Water Recycling Plant (AWRP) with a maximum daily deployable output of 11 MI/d. The site for the AWRP is likely to require approximately 9 hectares (ha). The AWRP will receive 16 MI/d of treated wastewater from the existing Lowestoft Water Recycling Centre (WRC) operated by Anglian Water Services.
 - Construction of a new pumping station and potential minor modifications to the existing works at the Lowestoft WRC, which is owned and operated by Anglian Water, to divert treated wastewater to the proposed AWRP.
 - Two proposed Service Reservoirs (SRs) for storage of drinking water, located at strategic locations for onward supply and storage. The two SRs are to be sized to provide 36 hours of storage. The central SR will have a capacity of approximately 17ML and the western SR will be approximately 13ML. It is likely the SRs will require a construction site size of approximately 4ha each.
 - A network of proposed pipelines (totalling approximately 120km), connecting existing infrastructure to proposed infrastructure, transferring new water sources to be treated for onward supply and storage.
3. Other elements of the Project include:
 - Associated development (within the meaning of section 115 of the Planning Act) , which may include, but is not limited to: Landscaping, environmental mitigation, enhancement and compensation measures, accesses and utility connections as identified by the Applicant for the site including electrical substations, telecoms, water and sewerage facilities, temporary works to support construction, works to support operation and maintenance (including pipelines), site accesses, temporary and

permanent utility connections and highway diversions (the “Associated Development”); and

- Ancillary matters (including matters that fall within the scope of section 120 of the Planning Act) (the “Ancillary Matters”).

4. The Project can therefore be summarised as comprising:

- the Principal Development;
- the Associated Development; and
- the Ancillary Matters,

all as detailed or referred to in the Request.

5. The Secretary of State notes that the Request relates to the Principal Development.

6. Having considered the Applicant’s Request and the details of the Principal Development, the Secretary of State is satisfied that:

- the Principal Development is not a project or part of a project that satisfies the necessary criteria to fall within the definition of a "nationally significant infrastructure project" ("**NSIP**") under the Planning Act and therefore it is appropriate to consider use of the power in section 35(1) of the Planning Act;
- the Principal Development forms part of a project in the field of water in accordance with section 35(2)(a)(i) of the Planning Act;
- the Principal Development will (when completed) be wholly within England in accordance with section 35(2)(b) and (3) of the Planning Act;
- no application for consent or authorisation mentioned in section 33(1) or (2) of the Planning Act has been made in relation to the Principal Development to which the Request relates; and
- the Applicant's Request constitutes a "qualifying request" in accordance with section 35ZA(11) of the Planning Act.

7. Having considered the details of the Applicant’s proposals as set out in the Request, the Secretary of State concludes that the Project is of national significance in accordance with section 35(2)(c), for the reasons set out in Annex A below.

8. The Secretary of State considers that if the details of the Project change, before submitting any application to the Planning Inspectorate, the Applicant

may wish to seek confirmation from the Secretary of State that the development that is the subject of the proposed application is the same as that for which the Direction is hereby given.

9. The Secretary of State has taken the direction within the conditions as required by sections 35A(2) and (5) of the Planning Act and issues this Direction accordingly under sections 35(1) and 35ZA of the Planning Act.
10. THE SECRETARY OF STATE DIRECTS under sections 35(1) and 35ZA of the Planning Act that the Principal Development is to be treated as development for which development consent is required. Any application for development consent for the Principal Development may also include any matters that may properly be included in a development consent order (in accordance with section 120 of the Planning Act) including associated development (within the meaning of section 115 of the Planning Act) and ancillary matters (section 120(3) of the Planning Act).
11. THE SECRETARY OF STATE FURTHER DIRECTS in accordance with section 35ZA(3)(b) and (5) of the Planning Act that any proposed application for a consent or authorisation mentioned in section 33(1) or (2) of the Planning Act in relation to the Principal Development is to be treated as a proposed application for which development consent is required.
12. This direction is given without prejudice to the Secretary of State's consideration of any application for development consent which may be made in relation to all or part of the Project.

Signed by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Reynolds', is written over a light blue circular official stamp.

Rt Hon Emma Reynolds MP

Secretary of State

Annex A

REASONS FOR THE DECISION TO ISSUE THE DIRECTION

The Secretary of State is of the opinion that the Direction should be issued for the reasons below:-

1. The Principal Development, namely the principal elements of the Project, is a development for which development consent is required since the Project is considered to be nationally significant having in particular taken into account that the Project would:
 - play a critical role in maintaining a resilient and secure water supply for people in the east of England, and is therefore recognised as a needed and important piece of infrastructure in the Applicant's current Water Resources Management Plan published October 2024 (WRMP24);
 - Support the UK Government's environmental objectives and the Environment Agency in delivering abstraction licence reductions;
 - Mitigates the social and economic risks of water restrictions, safeguarding economic growth through resilient water supplies, and lifts the Moratorium on non-domestic water supplies in the town of Eye and surrounding villages.
 - play an important role in enabling Sizewell C, an NSIP, to become operational, with the project supplying mains water to Sizewell in the long run, to facilitate commissioning and operations of its Nuclear Power Station which is currently under construction.
2. Furthermore, the Principal Development is for a complex and substantial scheme, involving extensive infrastructure works and requiring multiple powers and consents (including multiple planning permissions, compulsory acquisition powers and highway orders). It would therefore benefit from a single, unified consenting process where an application is determined in a timely and consistent manner by the Secretary of State, removing the need, and planning uncertainty of applying, for numerous separate powers and consents.