

# Ynys Môn

## THE ISLE OF Anglesey

### Topic Paper 1: Natural Environment



Prepared in support of the Wylfa  
Newydd Project: Supplementary  
Planning Guidance

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# I Introduction

## I.1 Purpose of this Topic Paper

I.1.1 The purpose of this topic paper is to bring together the evidence base and policy context in relation to the natural environment to inform the updating of the Wylfa Newydd Supplementary Planning Guidance (Wylfa Newydd SPG). It is one of 11 topic papers that have been prepared to support the:

- Identification of the key matters to be considered in drafting the revised SPG;
- Provision of guidance with respect to how the revised SPG could respond to the challenges and opportunities identified; and
- To offer further information to the public in support of consultation on the draft revised SPG.

I.1.2 **Box 1.1** provides a full list of topic papers being prepared in support of the Wylfa Newydd SPG.

<b>Box 1.1</b>	<b>Topic Papers Prepared in Support of the Wylfa Newydd SPG</b>
	Topic Paper 1: Natural Environment
	Topic Paper 2: Historic Environment
	Topic Paper 3: Housing
	Topic Paper 4: Economic Development
	Topic Paper 5: Transport
	Topic Paper 6: Amenity
	Topic Paper 7: Climate Change
	Topic Paper 8: Infrastructure
	Topic Paper 9: Waste
	Topic Paper 10: Population and Community
	Topic Paper 11: North Anglesey

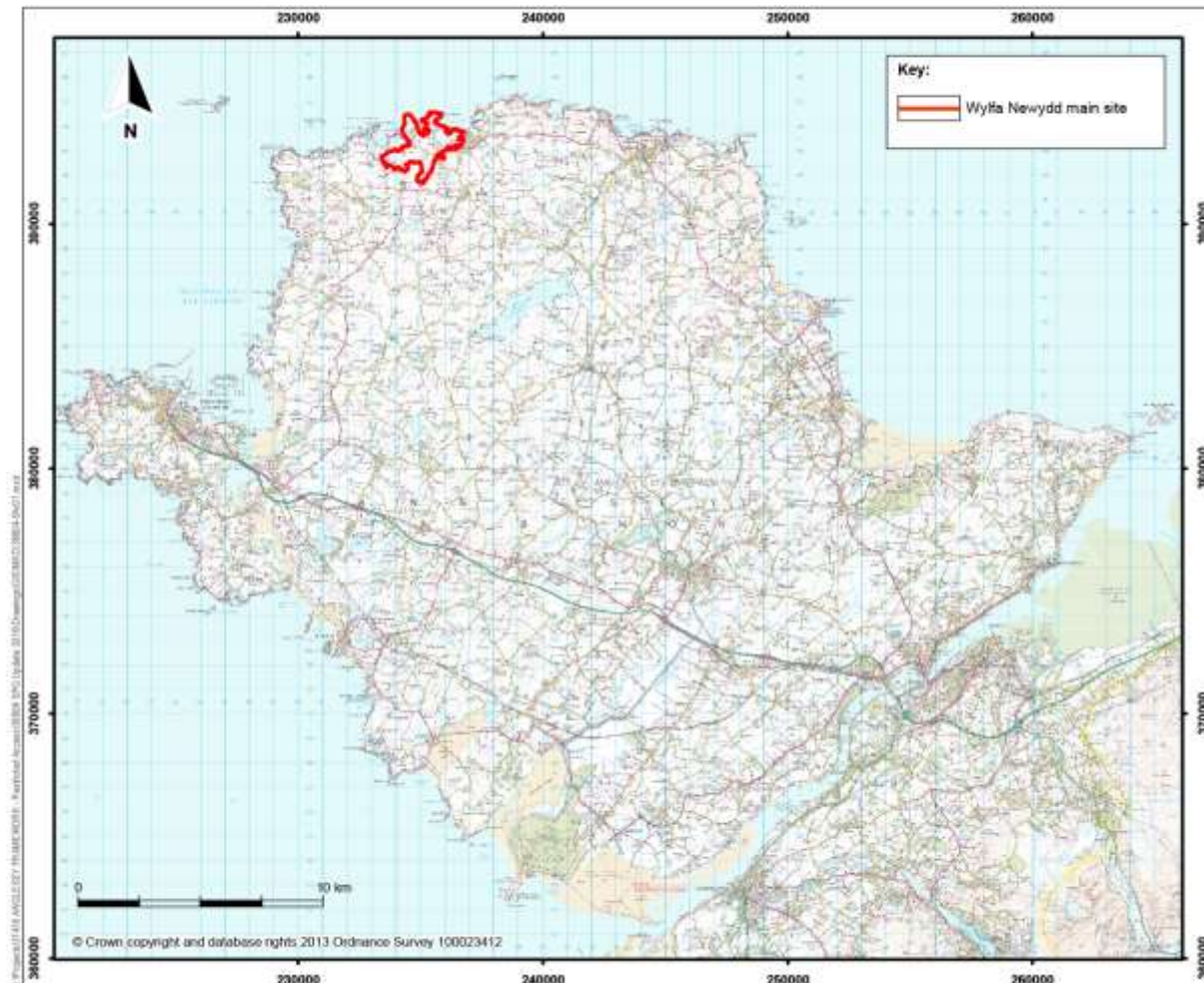
I.1.3 Ten topic papers were originally issued to support the SPG when it was first published by Isle of Anglesey County Council (the County Council) in 2014. Since that time the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (JLDP) has been adopted which has required the topic papers to be updated in line with extant local planning policy including the drafting of an additional topic paper as indicated in Box 1.1 above.

## 1.2 Context

### Wylfa Newydd

- 1.2.1 Wylfa has been identified by the UK Government in the National Policy Statement (NPS) for Nuclear Power Generation (EN-6) as a possible site for a new nuclear power station (see Part 4 and Annex C of the NPS). Horizon Nuclear Power (Horizon) plans to deliver two Advanced Boiling Water Reactors (ABWRs), generating a minimum of 2,700MW, on the Wylfa Newydd main site. The Wylfa site is approximately 300 hectare (ha) in size and it is located beside the existing Magnox nuclear power plant (which ceased electricity generation in December 2015). The project will also include associated development both on the Wylfa Newydd site and at various other off-site locations (see Figure I.1).

Figure I.1 Location of the Wylfa Newydd Main Site



- 1.2.2 Construction of the new nuclear power station is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. Legislation provides that projects like Wylfa Newydd are of such potential importance to the UK that a

different consenting process to the “normal” grant of planning permission by the local planning authority applies. Under this process, Horizon (the project promoter) proposes to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the power station to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Secretary of State). The application will be made through the Planning Inspectorate who, following examination, will recommend to the Secretary of State whether development consent should be granted or not. The final decision on whether to grant or refuse development consent rests with the Secretary of State<sup>1</sup>.

- 1.2.3 Although the County Council is not the consenting authority for the NSIP, it will seek to ensure that development has regard to the strategic policies and principles of the Development Plan (the JLDP), the relevant NPSs, national (Wales) planning policy and guidance, and relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance. The JLDP is the spatial plan that gives effect to, *inter alia*, the Anglesey Economic Regeneration Strategy and the Energy Island Programme (EIP).
- 1.2.4 In addition to the proposed power station, Horizon will bring forward other projects directly related to Wylfa Newydd. These include off-site power station facilities and other facilities and works connected with the development (associated developments). In accordance with the NPS (para 2.3.4), associated development may be proposed at the main site, or may relate to works on land located off the main site. Associated development applications are now covered by the Planning Act 2008 in Wales and can, therefore, also be determined through the DCO process. Separately, third parties may bring forward development proposals indirectly related to the project. These might include, for example, sites for housing that will be occupied by construction workers. These development proposals would require consent under the Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA).
- 1.2.5 Since the previous version of this Topic Paper, Horizon has refined the likely off-site power station facilities and associated development required as part of the Wylfa Newydd Project. It has undertaken three stages of pre-application consultation (in 2014, 2016 and 2017) relating to the proposals and, in the third of these stages (PAC 3), it presented a series of preferred options. The off-site power station facilities are now proposed on one site in Llanfaethlu and the associated development is likely to include:
- Site preparation, clearance and enabling works for the new power station (within the Wylfa Newydd main site);

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<sup>1</sup> Further information on the DCO application process is available via the Planning Inspectorate’s website: <http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/>.

- Marine Off-Loading Facility (MOLF), breakwaters and Holyhead Deep, a deepwater disposal site for inert construction material;
- Off-line Highway improvements in four sections along the A5025;
- Temporary Freight Logistics Centre at Parc Cybi;
- Temporary Park and Ride facility at Dalar Hir; and
- Temporary accommodation for the construction workforce on the Site Campus (within the Wylfa Newydd main site).

1.2.6 In addition to the above associated development (that form part of the DCO application), Horizon also proposes to submit TCPA applications for site preparation and clearance works and for on-line improvements to the A5025. In this context, reference to the Wylfa Newydd Project in this document includes the proposed power station and other development on the Wylfa Newydd main site and also the off-site power station facilities and associated development proposals, including the TCPA applications. However, the Wylfa Newydd Project does not include the North Wales Connection Project (NWCP) which will connect Wylfa Newydd to the electricity transmission infrastructure (i.e. the National Grid). The NWCP is also an NSIP. It is being promoted by National Grid and will be subject to a separate DCO application process.

1.2.7 The term 'project promoter' relates to both Horizon and any other third parties proposing development in direct response to Wylfa Newydd (for example, the provision of construction worker accommodation or related employment uses).

### **Wylfa Newydd Supplementary Planning Guidance**

1.2.8 Supplementary Planning Guidance is a means of setting out detailed thematic or site-specific guidance on the way in which development plan policies will be applied in particular circumstances or areas. The purpose of the Wylfa Newydd Supplementary Planning Guidance (Wylfa Newydd SPG) is to provide supplementary advice on important local direct or indirect matters and to set out the County Council's response to national and local policy and strategies in the context of the Wylfa Newydd Project. The SPG is supplemental to the recently adopted JLDP.

1.2.9 The Wylfa Newydd SPG is intended to:

- Inform the position which will be adopted by the County Council in its Local Impact Report<sup>2</sup> and relevant sections of the Statement of Common Ground<sup>3</sup>;
- Provide a planning framework (alongside the JLDP and other planning policy guidance) that helps guide the applicant(s) and influences the design and development of the Wylfa Newydd Project elements to ensure sustainable outcomes, with a focus on associated development;
- Inform pre-application discussions related to the main site, off-site and associated developments;
- Offer supplementary local level guidance, consistent with the relevant NPSs, which the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State may consider both important and relevant to the decision-making process; and
- Form a material consideration in the assessment of any Wylfa Newydd Project related TCPA applications submitted by Horizon or other development promoters and businesses who may have, or wish to pursue, an interest in the project.

### 1.3 Natural Environment Overview

- 1.3.1 This topic paper addresses the natural environment. This includes the physical elements of water, soils, geology and geomorphology which together shape the landscape and support the associated species and habitats of the Isle of Anglesey. The natural environment encompasses a range of potentially sensitive receptors including protected or locally important habitats and species and sites, protected and important landscapes and coastline, surface freshwater and marine waters and groundwater. The scope of this topic paper addresses the main issues relating to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- 1.3.2 The natural environment is a key consideration for Wylfa Newydd. The Wylfa Newydd Project has the potential to both affect, and be affected by, environmental conditions on Anglesey, ranging from the presence of protected landscapes, species and sites, to the availability and quality of water resources to supply the project and

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<sup>2</sup> As part of the Planning Act 2008 process, the County Council will be invited to submit a Local Impact Report giving details of the likely impact of the proposed Wylfa Newydd Project on Anglesey. Further information on the preparation of local impact reports is available via the Planning Inspectorate's website: <http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Advice-note-1v2.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> A statement of common ground is a written statement prepared jointly by the applicant and another party or parties such as the County Council, setting out any matters on which they agree. Statements of common ground help focus on the examination on the material differences between the main parties.

the implications of future climate change. Wylfa Newydd cannot be considered in isolation as there are other potentially competing demands on the important environmental assets and resources of Anglesey. This requires an integrated approach such that emerging issues and potential cumulative impacts on the natural environment can be addressed through the SPG.

- 1.3.3 It should be noted that consideration of the natural environment is also inextricably linked to other issues such as climate change, land use, communities, tourism, amenity and recreation which are considered in more detail in other topic papers.

## 1.4 Structure of this Topic Paper

- 1.4.1 The remainder of this topic paper is structured as follows:

- **Section 2:** Identifies the key messages relative to the natural environment arising from a review of international/European, UK, national, regional and local legislation, strategies/policies and guidance;
- **Section 3:** Presents the baseline information about the natural environment on the Isle of Anglesey; and
- **Section 4:** Identifies the key matters related to the natural environment to be addressed by the Wylfa Newydd SPG and considers how the SPG could respond to each.



## 2 Policy Context

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The Wylfa Newydd SPG will influence, and will be influenced by, other plans and programmes at an international/ European, national, regional and local level. This section of the topic paper identifies the plans and programmes most relevant to the natural environment in the context of the Wylfa Newydd Project and distils the key policy messages that will need to be reflected in the SPG.

### 2.2 International/European Plans and Programmes

#### EU 7th Environmental Action Programme (2014 - 2020)

2.2.1 The seventh Environment Action Programme (EAP) will be guiding the European Union's (EU's) environment policy until 2020. The programme's vision is for the Union to be living well and within the planet's ecological limits by 2050. The programme identifies three key objectives:

- To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital;
- To turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy; and
- To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risk to health and wellbeing.

2.2.2 In support of these three key objectives, the programme identifies the following four "enablers" to help Europe deliver on these goals:

- Better implementation of legislation;
- Better information by improving the knowledge base;
- More and wiser investment for environment and climate policy; and
- Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies.

2.2.3 The programme is completed by two additional horizontal priority objectives, namely:

- To make the Union's cities more sustainable; and

- To help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively.

### **EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2001, revised 2006, reviewed 2009)**

2.2.4 The overall aim of the renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) was to identify and develop actions to enable the EU to achieve continuous long-term improvement of quality of life for both current and future generations, through the creation of sustainable communities able to manage and use resources efficiently and to tap the ecological and social innovation potential of the economy, ensuring prosperity, environmental protection and social cohesion. The strategy had objectives and actions for seven key priority challenges for the period until 2010, many of which are environmental (climate change and clean energy, sustainable transport, sustainable consumption and production, and the conservation and management of natural resources)<sup>4</sup>. The EU SDS has now been replaced by the EU 2020 Strategy<sup>5</sup> and the ‘Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’<sup>6</sup>. The latter sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets and was adopted in September 2015. The Agenda is a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030 world-wide, ensuring that no one is left behind. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda was a landmark achievement, providing for a shared global vision towards sustainable development for all.

### **Convention on Biological Diversity (1993)**

2.2.5 The Convention on Biological Diversity was inspired by the world community’s growing commitment to sustainable development and represented a significant step forward in the conservation of biological diversity. It was opened for signatures at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio Earth Summit) on 5 June 1992 and remained open for signatures until 4 June 1993, by

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<sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/strategy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/strategy/index_en.htm) (overview), <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52001DC0264> (2001 EU SDS) and <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52009DC0400> (2009 review) [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/SDGs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/SDGs/index_en.htm) (EU Sustainable Development Overview)

<sup>5</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester/framework/e>

<sup>6</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/SDGs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/SDGs/index_en.htm)

which time it had received 168 signatures. The Convention came into force on 29 December 1993<sup>7</sup>.

- 2.2.5 The three main objectives of this Convention, to be pursued in accordance with its relevant provisions, are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources. It is reflected in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) and the Anglesey Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

### **EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)**

- 2.2.6 The EC Habitats Directive (as amended) aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by the conservation of approximately 1,400 rare, threatened or endemic animal and plant species, plus around 200 rare and characteristic habitat types. Together with the EU Birds Directive, it established the EU wide Natural 2000 ecological network of protected areas, safeguarded against potentially damaging developments<sup>8</sup>.

### **EC Birds Directive (79/409/EEC, amended 2009 as 2009/147/EC)**

- 2.2.7 The EC Birds Directive aims to protect the 500 wild bird species that are naturally occurring in the EU. The Directive places great emphasis on the protection of habitats for endangered and migratory species. It establishes a network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) including the most suitable territories for these species. Since 1994, all SPAs are included in the Natural 2000 ecological network set up under the Habitats Directive<sup>9</sup>.

### **EU Biodiversity Strategy (2011)**

- 2.2.8 The EU Biodiversity Strategy, *'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020'* aims to reverse the continuing trends of biodiversity loss. The strategy includes targets and actions to help Europe reach its goal. Biodiversity loss is a significant challenge in the EU, with around one in four species currently threatened with extinction.
- 2.2.9 Central to achieving the EU 2020 biodiversity targets is the effective management of areas of high biodiversity value, protected in the Natura 2000 ecological network designated under the Habitats and Birds Directives. Sites in the network provide

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/intro/default.shtml>

<sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm)

<sup>9</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/birdsdirective/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/birdsdirective/index_en.htm)

space for nature, but they must be protected and enhanced as part of the broader issue of managing the entirety of Europe's green infrastructure.

- 2.2.10 In delivery of the EU Biodiversity Strategy the Commission has published a Communication on Green Infrastructure (COM(2013) 249 final), which provides an enabling framework for nature-based solutions. This guidance sets out an important part of Green Infrastructure; to enhance the role of nature based adaptation for the coherence of the Natura 2000 network. Green Infrastructure is defined by the Commission as “addressing the spatial structure of natural and semi-natural areas but also other environmental features which enable citizens to benefit from its multiple services. The underlying principle of Green Infrastructure is that the same area of land can frequently offer multiple benefits if its ecosystems are in a healthy state. Green Infrastructure investments are generally characterized by a high level of return over time, provide job opportunities, and can be a cost-effective alternative or be complementary to 'grey' infrastructure and intensive land use change. It serves the interests of both people and nature.”

#### **EU Guidelines on Climate Change and Natura 2000 (2013)**

- 2.2.11 These guidelines are primarily aimed at Natura 2000 site managers and policy makers. The purpose is to underline benefits from Natura 2000 sites in mitigating the impacts of climate change, reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience, and how adaptation of management for species and habitats protected by Natura 2000 can be used to tackle the effects of climate change. In focusing on what needs to be done, the guidelines identify opportunities for sensible adaptive planning. Often, this will involve integrated action between environmental and other sectors in order to realise multiple, and multiplier, benefits for nature and society.

#### **EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) – Integrated River Basin Management for Europe 2000**

- 2.2.12 The *Water Framework Directive* (WFD) was adopted by the EU in 2000 and introduced an approach to managing and protecting water, based not on national or political boundaries but on natural geographic and hydrological formations, i.e. river basins. It requires the coordination of various different EU policies and sets out a timetable for action, with 2015 as the target date for getting all European waters into 'good' ecological and chemical status (condition). The WFD is implemented in six-year recurring cycles. The first was 2009 – 2015 and the second is 2015 – 2021.
- 2.2.13 It identifies River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) as the key tools for implementing the WFD and set 2009 as the deadline for Member States to draw up RBMPs and

programmes of measures to meet the WFD objectives. RBMPs are drawn up after extensive public consultation and are valid for a six-year period<sup>10</sup>.

- 2.2.14 All applications for developments that are likely to result in effects on surface and/or groundwater should be accompanied by a WFD Compliance Assessment. Where the Compliance Assessment suggests that a development cannot meet the objectives of the WFD, there is a requirement to make a case to support an application for derogation under Article 4.7 of the WFD.

### **Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water 2012**

- 2.2.15 The Blueprint forms EU policy on water resources and is aimed at ensuring good quality water in sufficient quantities for all legitimate uses. Its three underpinning elements are: the Blueprint Communication, the 3rd Implementation Report on the Water Framework Directive – River Basin Management Plans, and A review of the Strategy on water scarcity and droughts.
- 2.2.16 The “Blueprint” outlines actions that concentrate on better implementation of current water legislation, integration of water policy objectives into other policies, and filling the gaps in particular as regards water quantity and efficiency. The objective is to ensure that a sufficient quantity of good quality water is available for people's needs, the economy and the environment throughout the EU. It covers a timespan up to 2050 and is expected to drive EU water policy over the long term. The Water Blueprint highlights that preserving water is not only about environmental protection, health and well-being, but it is also about economic growth and prosperity<sup>11</sup>.

### **European Landscape Convention (1994)**

- 2.2.17 The *European Landscape Convention* (ELC) defines landscape as “*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*”. It promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. It was adopted on 20 October 2000 in Florence (Italy) and came into force on 1 March 2004 (Council of Europe Treaty Series no. 176).
- 2.2.18 The first aim of the ELC is to encourage States to introduce a national landscape policy that is not restricted to the protection of exceptional landscapes but also takes everyday landscapes into consideration. It requires landscape to be integrated into

<sup>10</sup> European Commission (November 2010) Guidance Note: Water Framework Directive

<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm)

regional and town planning policies and in cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, as well as any other policies with possible direct or indirect impacts on landscape. It also aims, through transfrontier co-operation, to reinforce the presence of the landscape as a value to be shared by different cultures<sup>12</sup>.

## 2.3 UK Plans and Programmes

### Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (2011)

- 2.3.1 This National Policy Statement (NPS) sets out national policy for energy infrastructure. In relation to the natural environment, the NPS addresses biological and geological conservation, flood risk, coastal change, landscape and visual impacts, land use and green infrastructure, and water quality and resources.
- 2.3.2 The NPS states that development should aim to avoid significant harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests, including through mitigation and consideration of reasonable alternatives or compensation measures. Appropriate weight must be attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance; protected species; habitats and other species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity; and to biodiversity and geological interests within the wider environment. Development proposals provide many opportunities for building-in beneficial biodiversity or geological features as part of good design.

### National Policy Statement for Nuclear Power Generation (EN-6) (2011)

- 2.3.3 This National Policy Statement (NPS), taken together with EN-1, provides the primary basis for decisions taken by the Secretary of State on applications it receives for nuclear power stations. Volume I of the Statement identifies Wylfa as a potentially suitable site for the deployment of a new nuclear power station. The document sets out the matters to be included in the assessment of impacts, including:
- Flood risk;
  - Water quality and resources;
  - Coastal change;
  - Biodiversity and geological conservation; and
  - Landscape and visual impacts.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/home>

### UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2012)

- 2.3.4 The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework succeeds the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and ‘Conserving Biodiversity – the UK Approach’, and is the result of a change in strategic thinking following the publication of the Convention on Biological Diversity’s (CBD)<sup>13</sup> ‘Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020’ and its 20 ‘Aichi Biodiversity Targets’, at Nagoya, Japan in October 2010, and the launch of the new EU Biodiversity Strategy. The Framework demonstrates how the work of the countries and the UK contributes to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and identifies the activities required to complement the country biodiversity strategies in achieving the targets.
- 2.3.5 Following the publication of the UK biodiversity Framework, the UK BAP was further revised in August 2012.
- 2.3.6 The UK BAP sets out three types of Action Plans with targeted actions:
- i. Species Action Plans;
  - ii. Habitat Action Plans; and
  - iii. Local Biodiversity Action Plans.
- 2.3.7 The delivery of the UKBAP in Wales is led by the Wales Biodiversity Partnership based on the Wales Biodiversity Framework (2010).

### The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003

- 2.3.8 These Regulations transpose the *EU Water Directive Framework* into national law in the UK and apply to England and Wales.

### UK Marine Policy Statement (2011)

- 2.3.9 The Marine Policy Statement (MPS) was prepared and adopted for the purpose of section 44 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. It places a duty on Marine Plan Authorities (the Welsh Ministers for inshore and offshore regions in Wales) to produce Marine Plans Together with Marine Plans, the MPS forms a plan-led system for the management of the marine area, its resources, and the activities and interactions that take place within it.
- 2.3.10 The MPS acknowledges (in section 2.6.5) that there is no legal definition for “seascape” in the UK but states that references to seascape within the MPS should be

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<sup>13</sup> The UK signed up to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro.

taken as meaning “*landscapes with views of the coast or seas, and coasts and the adjacent marine environment with cultural, historic and archaeological links with each other*”.

- 2.3.11 It also states that, in considering the impact of an activity or development on seascape, the matters to be taken into account include existing character and quality, how highly it is valued and its capacity to accommodate change specific to the development, and that landscape character assessment methodology may be an aid to this process.

### **The Hedgerow Regulations (1997)**

- 2.3.12 These Regulations make provision for the protection of important hedgerows in England and Wales. Regulation 4 defines a hedgerow as “important” if it has existed for 30 years or more and satisfies at least one of the criteria in Part II of Schedule I, relating to archaeology and history, and/or wildlife and landscape.

## **2.4 National (Wales) Plans and Programmes**

### **Environment (Wales) Act 2016**

- 2.4.1 Consisting of seven parts, the act seeks to deliver the sustainable management of natural resources and provides the statutory powers to enable Welsh Ministers to put in place binding emission reduction targets to combat climate change. The Act replaces the duty previously contained within the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 which required public bodies to have regard to conserving biodiversity with a duty that highlights biodiversity as an essential component of ecosystem resilience. The new duty also requires public authorities to report on the actions they have taken to improve biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience.

### **Planning Policy Wales (9th Edition) (2016)**

- 2.4.2 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) provides the policy framework for the effective preparation of local planning authorities’ development plans and can be a material consideration in the determination of individual planning applications. Chapter 4 (Sustainable Development) refers to the Welsh Government’s Sustainable Development Scheme which sets out an ambition for Wales to use its fair share of the Earth’s resources so that, within a generation, the ecological footprint is reduced to the global average availability of resources – 1.88 global hectares per person.
- 2.4.3 Chapter 5 of PPW explains that the natural heritage of Wales includes its geology, land forms and biodiversity, its natural beauty and amenity, the relationships between landform and landscape, habitat and wildlife and their capacity to sustain economic activity and provide enjoyment and inspiration. It notes that natural heritage and



valued landscapes in Wales are not confined to statutorily designated sites but extend across all of Wales – to urban areas, the countryside and the coast.

2.4.4 It sets out the Welsh Government's objectives for the conservation and improvement of the natural heritage in Wales which are to:

- Promote the conservation of landscape and biodiversity, in particular the conservation of native wildlife and habitats;
- Ensure that action in Wales contributes to meeting international responsibilities and obligations for the natural environment;
- Ensure that statutorily designated sites are properly protected and managed;
- Safeguard protected species; and
- Promote the functions and benefits of soils, and in particular their function as a carbon store.

2.4.5 PPW also states that it is important that biodiversity and landscape considerations are taken into account at an early stage in both development plan preparation and development management, and that measures to conserve the landscape and biodiversity should be a central part of this.

#### **Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)**

2.4.6 TAN 5 states that nature conservation should be integrated into all planning decisions in order to deliver social, economic and environmental objectives. It addresses the need to provide net biodiversity benefit.

#### **TAN 14: Coastal Planning (1998)**

2.4.7 The coastal zone is an area of land and adjacent sea that are considered to be mutually interdependent. TAN 14 provides guidance on developments within this zone and assessments of coastal physical and biological conditions.

#### **TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004)**

2.4.8 TAN 15 provides advice regarding development and flood risk in relation to sustainability principles. It also provides a framework for assessing the risk of river/coastal flooding or from water that flows from developments to other locations.

### Environment Strategy for Wales (2006)

2.4.9 The Environment Strategy provides a framework aimed at achieving an environment that is clean, healthy, varied and that is respected by the people of Wales. The Strategy sets a strategic direction for the next 20 years (2006 – 2026) and has five environmental themes:

- Addressing climate change;
- Sustainable resource use;
- Distinctive biodiversity, landscapes and seascapes;
- Our local environment; and
- Environmental hazards.

2.4.10 For each of these topics, the Strategy explains the issues and sets out the environmental outcomes the Welsh Government wishes to achieve, along with the associated indicators and timelines for delivery. The Strategy is currently being reviewed to ensure it reflects the relevant commitments in the *Natural Resource Management Programme*, which has been created to take forward the policy commitments proposed in the *Sustaining a Living Wales* consultation.

### A Living Wales: Our Natural Environment Framework (2010, updated 2011)

2.4.11 The *Natural Environment Framework* updates the approach outlined in the Environment Strategy to ensure that the environment is addressed as a whole. Following the initial consultations, and the publication of the *Natural Ecosystems Assessment* (2011), plans to adopt a new ecosystem approach were published by the Welsh Government the following year (2011).

### One Wales One Planet – the Sustainable Development Scheme for Wales (2009)

2.4.12 The focus of *One Wales: One Planet* – The Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Government is the vision of a sustainable Wales, to be achieved through high-level sustainable development actions and reducing the ecological footprint of Wales.

### The Wales Spatial Plan – People, Places, Futures (2008 Update)

2.4.13 *The Wales Spatial Plan* provides a broad 20 year vision and helps deliver the Welsh Government's priorities set out in *One Wales*. Its purpose is to ensure that activities in the public, private and third sectors in Wales are integrated and sustainable, and that actions within an area support each other and jointly move

towards a shared vision for Wales. 'Valuing Our Environment' is a Theme in the Spatial Plan which sets out the Welsh Government's vision for safeguarding and enhancing both the natural and built environment. 'Valuing Our Environment' includes developing a strategy to reduce each Area's ecological footprint across the range of its activities, implementing coastal management, and identifying areas of environmental opportunity in Spatial Plan Areas to improve wellbeing and quality of life in Wales' rural areas in particular.

- 2.4.14 For north west Wales, the overall aim is to protect the natural and built environment which includes areas designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and to realise the environmental opportunities that these assets provide. This will help reconnect communities with the environment, attract visitors, and promote on-going economic and social investment and development through a high quality natural and built environment. Development pressures may be addressed through supporting ecological connectivity and improving biodiversity resilience. The availability of sufficient water and its sustainable use should underpin development plans.
- 2.4.15 In due course, the *Wales Spatial Plan* will be replaced by the *National Development Framework* (NDF) which is currently being produced by the Welsh Government in accordance with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015. The NDF will sit alongside PPW and will set out a 20 year land use framework for Wales. It will fulfil a number of roles, including setting out the Welsh Government's land use priorities, providing a national land use framework for Strategic and Local Development Plans, supporting the delivery of national strategies, including the Environment Strategy and supporting the determination of Developments of National Significance<sup>14</sup>.

#### **Water for People and the Environment - Water Resources Strategy for Wales (2009)**

- 2.4.16 This Water Resources Strategy (WRS), published by the Environment Agency, sets out how water resources should be managed in Wales to 2050 and beyond to ensure that there will be enough water for people and the environment. It advocates a whole catchment approach to water resources management and multi-organisation involvement and has four themes:
- WRS A – Adapting to and mitigating climate change;
  - WRS B – A better water environment;
  - WRS C – Sustainable planning and management of water resources;
  - WRS D – Water and the water environment are valued.

<sup>14</sup> <http://gov.wales/topics/planning/national-development-framework-for-wales/?lang=en>

### **Water Resources Strategy for Wales – First Action Plan (2010)**

2.4.17 This First Action Plan sets out the actions to deliver the aims and objectives of the four themes in the WRS for Wales.

### **Strategic Policy Position Statement on Water (SPPS) (2009, updated 2011)**

2.4.18 This Welsh Government SPPS updates the original statement published 2009. It reflects key developments in the previous 2 years and highlights areas that will be a priority in the future. The SPPS states that managing water effectively will become an increasing challenge as a result of climate change and addressing this will be an important part of delivering the Welsh Government's Climate Change Strategy. It states that recognising and valuing 'ecosystem services' is a key driver for the Government's *Natural Environment Framework* and it expects all organisations that make key decisions in relation to impacts on water to adopt an ecosystem services and integrated, whole catchment approach to water management.

2.4.19 The Statement describes the "*apparent abundance of water in Wales (as) misleading, particularly in the light of the most recent climate change projections.*" The SPPS states that the Welsh Government supports measures to encourage innovation and a longer term shift towards a system that recognises the value of the water resource available to Wales.

### **Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy (ICZMS) (2007)**

2.4.20 The ICZMS *Making the Most of Wales' Coast* aims to promote the use of ICZM as a management process in order to facilitate more integrated working or partnership working on the coast by the different interests, including local communities.

### **Welsh National Marine Plan, Initial Draft (2015)**

2.4.21 This document is a pre-consultation version of the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP). Its purpose is to guide the sustainable development of the marine area around Wales through the sustainable management of marine natural resources. It covers both inshore waters (out to 12 nautical miles) and offshore waters (beyond 12 nautical miles), with the landward extent being high water.

2.4.22 Plan objective 7 promotes the stewardship and enjoyment of marine related heritage assets, nationally protected landscapes and decisions that take account of the seascape character of the local area.

2.4.23 Policy SOC-09: states:

*“Decision making authorities should ensure that proposals demonstrate how potential impacts on seascapes have been taken into consideration at an early stage of development and should, in order of preference:*

- a) Avoid adverse impacts on seascape;*
- b) Minimise them where they cannot be avoided;*
- c) Mitigate them where they cannot be minimised;*
- d) Present the case for proceeding where (a-c) are not possible.”*

- 2.4.24 The MPS goes on to say that seascapes should be considered from the outset of any proposal that has the potential to affect seascape character and that it is in the early stages of a project that the mitigation of adverse seascape impact is most effective, with appropriate siting and the consideration of alternatives being the first priority in any approach to the mitigation of potential impacts. Marine Character Areas are illustrated in Figure 7 of the WNMP.
- 2.4.25 It notes that decision makers must have regard to the statutory purposes of National Parks and AONBs in coastal areas, including their plans, policies and the special qualities being protected and also areas on the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens in Wales.

#### **Draft Policy Statement for Protected Landscapes in Wales (2013)**

- 2.4.26 The purpose of this policy statement is to set out the Welsh Governments’ strategic policy framework for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and National Parks in Wales. It replaces 'Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities in Wales' (March 2007).
- 2.4.27 The Statement identifies a direct link between the purpose and ambition for the AONBs and National Parks and Welsh Government’s commitment to sustainability, the alleviation of poverty, addressing the root causes of inequality and supporting civil society. The acceptance of sustainable development as the central organising principle of AONBs and National Parks recognises the competing pressures on landscape and environment management.
- 2.4.28 An ‘ecosystem approach’ to landscape management will mean considering and regulating the environment and its health as a whole rather than dealing with individual aspects separately. The Statement acknowledges that attainment of this vision and outcomes set out cannot be achieved by the public sector alone, and will require working in partnership with landowners and managers as well as a wide range of other organisations.

- 2.4.29 The emergence of sustainable development as a central organising principle for AONB and national park management should boost development plan policies, improving management decisions while giving weight to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of these areas. This will also enable progress to encourage jobs and a sustainable economy.
- 2.4.30 Welsh Government guidance to planning authorities sets out that there should be a continued presumption against major developments in AONBs and National Parks as these are very likely to have unacceptable impacts on the natural beauty of the area. Natural beauty and nature conservation are mutually supportive and have therefore always been a component of landscape conservation. Designated landscapes must therefore continue their role in conserving biodiversity as an integral part of sustainable land management and the delivery of ecosystem services.
- 2.4.31 Consultations on this draft Policy Statement were completed in September 2013 and a final version of this Statement has not yet been issued.

#### **National Landscapes: Realising their Potential (2015)**

- 2.4.32 This was a review of the nationally designated landscapes in Wales, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and National Parks, which represent 25% of the land area of Wales. It recognised the wider role of these places as internationally recognised environmental and natural landscape assets, their living and vibrant cultural and socio-economic significance and their potential role to continue to meet the public and well-being needs of future generations. It recommended a new and comprehensive National Landscape Governance Framework for these internationally recognised National Landscapes in Wales.

#### **Future Landscapes: Delivering in Wales (2017)**

- 2.4.33 This further review of AONBs and National Parks in Wales was undertaken by the Welsh Government and takes, as its starting point, the 2015 report (described above). It recognises that all landscapes have special qualities (as per the ELC) and recommends that the bodies and partnerships with responsibility for the designated landscapes should work together to promote the social, cultural and economic value and sustainable use of all landscapes, working across boundaries with NRW and with local partnerships.
- 2.4.34 It recommends that future governance models should allow for localities beyond the designated landscapes to work in partnership to deliver sustainable approaches to management, that current models of governance should evolve and should include a wide range of delivery and partnership models and that there should be a consistent approach to planning and performance reporting. It advocates greater flexibility in

structures in order to meet the needs of places and communities and sets out a list of essential first steps to implementing the recommendations set out in the report.

### Woodlands for Wales Strategy (2010)

2.4.35 The Welsh Government's '*Woodlands for Wales Strategy*' sets out desired outcomes which include increases in woodland cover in Wales, compensatory planting where development results in the removal of woodland, and better protection for existing individual trees, particularly veteran trees, in recognition of their contribution to ecosystem services and our quality of life. The Strategy is supported by various Policy Position Statements and the *Woodlands for Wales: Action Plan*. The current Action Plan runs until March 2020.

## 2.5 Regional and Sub-Regional Plans and Programmes

### Western Wales River Basin Management Plan 2015-2021 (2015)

2.5.1 The *Western Wales River Basin Management Plan* (WWRBMP) has been produced by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) in accordance with the *EU Water Framework Directive* (WFD). This is the second version of the WWRBMP, the first being published in 2009 to cover the 6 year cycle to 2015. The purpose of the WWRBMP is to protect and improve the water environment for the wider benefits of people and wildlife. The environmental objectives are legally binding and have been approved by the Welsh Government. It includes the Programme of Measures needed to achieve the objectives of the WFD and the predicted environmental outcomes over the next six years. The approach and actions affect all types of water including rivers, lakes, canals, groundwater, wetlands, estuaries and coastal waters.

2.5.2 In particular, the WWRBMP addresses:

- Improving the management of rural land;
- Reducing the impact of transportation and built environments;
- Ensuring sufficient amounts of sustainable water;
- Improving wildlife habitats; and
- Dealing with single source pollution.

2.5.3 The North West Wales area of the Plan stretches west and south from Conwy covering the Island of Anglesey, the Llyn Peninsula and land draining to Cardigan Bay as far south as Borth. The Plan highlights that the tourism industry is of huge economic importance to North West Wales. There are many EC designated bathing

waters and opportunities for water based recreation including angling, sailing and canoeing. A legacy of this still exists today with abandoned mines giving rise to elevated metal levels in rivers which sometimes directly affect ecological quality. This includes the Parys Mountain copper mine on Anglesey.

### **West of Wales Shoreline Management Plan 2 (2012)**

- 2.5.4 The Welsh Government has defined a policy of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) which encourages all organisations with an interest in the coastline of Wales to work together to formulate policies and plans that will lead to vibrant, economically successful and sustainable communities around the coastline of Wales. Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) are non-statutory policy documents that provide key information to inform the statutory planning process in developing Local Development Plans and economic development strategies.
- 2.5.5 The West of Wales SMP covers 1,000km of shoreline, from St Ann's Head to the Great Orme. It provides a description of the natural coastal processes (including erosion, sedimentation and flooding) and an assessment of the risks associated with coastal evolution, and presents a policy framework to address these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment in a sustainable manner.
- 2.5.6 The SMP divides the coastline into 7 Coastal Areas (A – G), each of which is sub-divided into Policy Development Zones (PDZs). Anglesey is Coastal Zone G and the Wylfa Newydd site is within PDZ18: North Anglesey. The Policy for this zone is No Active Intervention but with monitoring of existing defences and the overarching plan is to steer management in such a manner that the important landscape and natural qualities of the whole area are maintained.
- 2.5.7 The area around Wylfa Head is described as “Hard Rock Shore” and it is considered at minimal risk of erosion<sup>15</sup>.

## **2.6 Local Plans and Programmes**

### **Joint Local Development Plan (JLDP) 2017**

- 2.6.1 The Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Development Local Plan (JLDP) sets out the planning policy framework and strategic aims for development and land use from 2011 to 2026.

<sup>15</sup> See DECC (2010) Habitats Regulations Assessment: Site Report for Wylfa, October 2010, [www.energyngpsconsultation.decc.gov.uk](http://www.energyngpsconsultation.decc.gov.uk) [Accessed July 2013]



2.6.2 The JLDP is underpinned by several strategic objectives that related to the natural environment including:

- SO6: manage, protect and enhance the quality and quantity of the water environment and reduce water consumption; and
- SO17: protect, enhance and manage the natural environment and heritage assets of the Plan area including its natural resources, wildlife habitats, and its landscape character and historic environment.

2.6.3 The JLDP contains several strategic policies relevant to the natural environment. These are summarised in **Box 2.1**.

**Box 2.1 Summary of JLDP Strategic Policies Relevant to the Natural Environment**

- Strategic Policy PS 2 Infrastructure and Developer Contributions describes how and when planning obligations will be applied.
- Strategic Policy PS 5 Sustainable Development states that development will be supported where it is demonstrated that they are consistent with the principles of sustainable development and lists the criteria all proposals should meet, including to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment, its landscapes and biodiversity assets.
- Strategic Policy PS 6 Alleviating and Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change sets out that proposals will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that they have fully taken account of and responded to the policy criteria, including ensuring that the ability of landscapes, environments and species to adapt to the harmful effects of climate change is not affected, and that compensatory environments are provided if necessary.
- Strategic Policy PS 9 Wylfa Newydd and Related Development applies to the proposed new nuclear power station including development associated with it.
- Strategic Policy PS 10 Wylfa Newydd Campus Style Temporary Accommodation for Construction Workers applies to the proposed associated development.
- Strategic Policy PS 11 Wylfa Newydd Logistics Centres applies to the proposed associated development.
- Strategic Policy PS 12 Wylfa Newydd Park and Ride and Park and Share Facilities applies to the proposed associated development.
- Strategic Policy PS 19 Conserving and where appropriate Enhancing the Natural Environment. This policy sets out that development will be managed so as to conserve and where appropriate enhance the Plan area's distinctive natural

**Box 2.1 Summary of JLDP Strategic Policies Relevant to the Natural Environment**

environment, countryside and coastline, and proposals that have a significant adverse effect on them will be refused unless the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweighs the value of the site or area and national policy protections for that site and area. When determining planning applications, consideration should be given to the following:

- Safeguard the Plan area’s habitats and species, geology, history, the coastline and landscapes;
- Protect or where appropriate enhance sites of international, national, regional and local importance and, where appropriate, their settings in line with National Policy;
- Have appropriate regard to the relative significance of international, national or local designations in considering the weight to be attached to acknowledged interests, ensuring that any international or national responsibilities and obligations are fully met in accordance with National Policy.
- Protect or enhance biodiversity within the Plan area and enhance and/or restore networks of natural habits in accordance with the Local Biodiversity Action Plan and Policy AMG5;
- Protect or enhance biodiversity through networks of green/blue infrastructure;
- Safeguard internationally, nationally and locally protected species;
- Protect, retain or enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the individual Landscape Character Areas (in line with Policy AMG2) and Seascape Character Areas (in line with Policy AMG4);
- Protect, retain or enhance trees, hedgerows or woodland of visual, ecological, historic cultural or amenity value.

2.6.4 These JLDP strategic policies are supporting by more detailed development management policies. Those relevant to the natural environment are set out in **Box 2.2**.

### Box 2.2 JLDP Development Management Policies Relevant to the Natural Environment

- Policy PCYFF1 Development Boundaries;
- Policy PCYFF2 Development Criteria;
- Policy PCYFF3 Design and Place Shaping;
- Policy PCYFF4 Design and Landscaping;
- Policy PCYFF6 Water Conservation;
- Policy ARNA1 Coastal Change Management Area;
- Policy AMG1 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans;
- Policy AMG2 Special Landscape Areas;
- Policy AMG3 Protecting and Enhancing Features and Qualities that are Distinctive to the Local Landscape Character;
- Policy AMG4 Coastal Protection;
- Policy AMG5 Local Biodiversity Conservation;
- Policy AMG6 Protecting Sites of Regional or Local Significance.

### Supplementary Planning Guidance: Design in the Urban and Rural Built Environment (2008)

- 2.6.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is in place to provide additional direction and guidance on specific local matters. Supplementary Planning Guidance: Design in the Urban and Rural Built Environment is concerned with providing guidance on the design of development in the urban and rural environment and consists of 32 Guidance Notes. Guidance Note 30: Development in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty states that the main factors that should be taken into account when considering the potential impacts of development in the AONB are views, landscape, habitats, history and culture. The conservation of the natural beauty and heritage should be integrated with the local needs for economic and social well-being, thus making sure that sustainable development principles form the basis for the planning, management and further development of the Island's AONB. The built environment and landscape are interrelated and should not be considered in isolation.
- 2.6.6 Whilst description is given on the general character of the AONB, the differing, unique and diverse environmental characteristics and landscape qualities of different areas should be stressed, and considered fully (by utilising landscape assessment

systems such as LANDMAP<sup>16</sup>) when contemplating any building enhancement or new development in the AONB. The aim of LANDMAP is to record, and make available to anyone with an interest in land, a wide range of information about the Welsh landscape.

2.6.7 Many of the Guidance Notes are of relevance to the Wylfa Newydd Project and, in addition to Guidance Note 30, others advise on the natural environment, including:

- Guidance Note 2: Sustainable Design. This advises on the five main principles of sustainable design – environment (including landscape, ecology, biodiversity and culture), local character and distinctiveness, robust structures that withstand the local climate, sustainable energy use (i.e. the use of renewable energy sources) and the sustainable use of materials and resources (in particular, the use of local materials from renewable sources);
- Guidance Note 5: Sustainable Construction. This advises that development proposals should present innovative design solutions that conserve natural resources, protect the environment, reduce emissions and improve the quality of life for local residents;
- Guidance Note 6: Site and Setting. This advises that the individual character of a site should be respected and the design should complement and enhance the setting. It refers to the Anglesey Landscape Strategy (1999) (now superseded by the Anglesey Landscape Strategy Update, 2011, see below) as a useful document for landscape analysis and to be used in design sites for development proposals;
- Guidance Note 12: Boundaries, Landscape & Trees. This states that it is vital that the existing landscape and proposed landscaping is considered within the design process and as an integrated part of the development. As well as providing a setting for the buildings, landscaped areas and greenspace can provide useful areas for amenity and wildlife, infiltration areas for surface water and an opportunity to retain existing features such as trees and hedgerows.

### **SPG: Wylfa Newydd Project (2014, updated 2017)**

2.6.8 This Topic Paper and its accompanying SPG provides supplementary advice on the natural environment for the Wylfa Newydd Project.

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<sup>16</sup> LANDMAP is a GIS (Geographical Information System) based landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated into a nationally consistent data set. The evaluation considers the five layers of Geological Landscape, Landscape Habitats, Visual & Sensory, Historic Landscape and Cultural Landscape.

### **Anglesey and Gwynedd Single Integrated Plan (2013-2017)**

2.6.9 The purpose of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Single Integrated Plan is to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Anglesey and Gwynedd over the next 12 years (to 2025). The Plan itself sets out the vision and priority actions for the next 4 years and aims to achieve a number of important outcomes under the key thematic areas of People, Place and Jobs, recognising that achieving these outcomes will make a positive impact on economic, social and environmental wellbeing. It is noted that the priorities under each theme are inter-dependent and support each other. The Plan also recognises the need to maintain a balance between developing the economy and protecting the environment. The Local Service Board is committed to making a difference in several areas, including taking care of the Island's natural environment and using resources sustainably.

### **Working for the Wealth of Wildlife: Anglesey's Local Biodiversity Action Plan**

2.6.10 Local delivery of the Wales Biodiversity Framework across Anglesey is through the Anglesey Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), which also seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity of particular local importance. The LBAP sets out the habitats and species that are considered to require action within Anglesey to maintain and enhance their status (e.g. population size, distribution etc) either locally or nationally.

2.6.11 The LBAP identifies habitats and species that may occur on potential development land and therefore highlights these of being of biodiversity value. The LBAP also identifies threats, targets and actions in relation to the receptors which could be relevant to impact assessment and mitigation.

2.6.12 The underlying principles for Anglesey's LBAP are that:

- Biodiversity action should be an integral part of local government policy and programmes, as well as involving individuals, communities, and other bodies, in partnership;
- Work should be based upon a sound knowledge base; the precautionary principle should guide environmental decisions where there is a lack of information.

### **The Ynys Môn Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (2007)**

2.6.14 This strategy sets out how the Environmental Agency (now Natural Resources Wales) will manage water resources in the catchment and provides information about how existing abstraction licences will be managed and the availability of water for further abstraction.

### The Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2015 – 2020

2.6.15 The Anglesey AONB is predominantly a coastal designation, covering most of Anglesey's 201 kilometre (km) coastline. The total coverage of the AONB on Anglesey is approximately 221sq km (21,500 hectares). Under Section 85 of the CRoW Act 2000 all relevant authorities should have regard to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

2.6.16 The AONB Management Plan identifies the features and special qualities of the AONB, and then determines what actions are required to ensure that these are conserved and enhanced for future generations.

2.6.17 The features and special qualities are:

- Coastal Landscape/Seascape Features;
- Traditional Agricultural Landscape Features;
- Geological and Geomorphological features;
- Expansive Views/Seascapes;
- Peace and Tranquillity;
- Islands around Anglesey;
- Broadleaved Woodlands;
- Lowland Coastal Heath;
- Species Rich Roadside Verges;
- Ecologically important Coastal and Wetland habitats (including rocky shores, mudflats and estuaries, saltmarshes, beaches and dunes);
- Built Environment including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings;
- Archaeology and Ancient Monuments/Historic Landscapes, Parks and Gardens;
- Rural Agricultural/Coastal Communities;
- Welsh Language;
- Soil, Air and Water Quality;
- Public Rights of Way Network; and

- Accessible Land and Water.

2.6.18 This updated version of the Management Plan explains the ecosystem approach and that adopting this approach would give full recognition to the values that the AONB's special qualities offer to people and, if maintained and enhanced, to future generations. It notes that the AONB contains and adjoins other protected sites and its health is bound to the development of its surrounding landscapes and seascape. The Management Plan adopts the 18 landscape character areas (LCAs) identified in the Landscape Strategy Update (2011) and the 32 seascape character areas (SCAs) identified in the Anglesey Seascape Character Assessment (2013).

### The Isle of Anglesey Landscape Strategy Update (2011)

2.6.19 This Strategy updates the original *LANDMAP* landscape assessment study for Anglesey published in 1999. It incorporates updated *LANDMAP* data and methodology and has resulted in an increase in the number of LCAs on Anglesey (from 15 to 18) compared to the 1999 study. Each LCA is described and evaluated using the *LANDMAP* methodology. Further information is provided in **Section 3.2**.

### Anglesey Seascape Character Assessment (2013)

2.6.20 This assessment was done in collaboration with Snowdonia National Park and the Countryside Council for Wales (now NRW). The work was a continuation of the regional seascapes work carried out by CCW in 2009. Further information is provided in **Section 3.2**.

## 2.7 Key Policy Messages for the Wylfa Newydd SPG

2.7.1 Based on the review of plans and programmes in this section, consistent key messages/issues relevant to the natural environment have been identified that will need to be considered in preparing the Wylfa Newydd SPG. These messages are summarised in **Box 2.4** below. These focus on the established principle of protection for the natural environment. There is also a clear recognition of the inter-relationship between environmental protection and enhancement and other key issues such as climate change, amenity and a sense of place, tourism, and economic benefits. This is reflected in the Welsh Government's proposed future approach to the management of the natural environment which is likely to focus on the adoption of the ecosystem approach, with policies addressing natural resource management in an integrated and consistent way. This approach, involving the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable land use in an equitable way should therefore be reflected in the SPG's approach to the natural environment.

**Box 2.4 Key Policy Messages for the Wylfa Newydd SPG: Natural Environment**

The need to:

- Protect and conserve soil and water resources and natural drainage systems;
- Protect marine (inshore and offshore) waters, the coastline, and the habitats and species they support;
- Protect and where possible enhance designated and protected landscapes, parks and gardens, habitats and species and geodiversity;
- Protect and where possible enhance local biodiversity resources, protecting and strengthening green and blue infrastructure and connectivity networks;
- Promote the sustainable use of water as a natural resource;
- Adopt an ecosystems services approach to assessing, managing, protecting and enhancing the natural environment;
- Provide a permanent legacy for the natural environment and for people to access and enjoy the countryside, coastline and marine environment;
- Integrate consideration of the natural environment with other important issues such as climate change, sustainability, communities, economy, tourism, sense of place;
- Consider cumulative impacts on natural environment assets.



## 3 Baseline Information and Future Trends

### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section describes the existing baseline characteristics of Anglesey in respect of the natural environment and identifies how this baseline could change in the future, taking into account the proposed Wylfa Newydd Project. This helps develop an understanding of the key opportunities and challenges that should be addressed by the Wylfa Newydd SPG. It draws on a range of datasets from sources including Natural Resources Wales (NRW) *LANDMAP* methodology, which creates a standardised approach to the assessment of the landscapes of Wales, Joint Nature Conservation Council (JNCC) and NRW.

### 3.2 Baseline Information

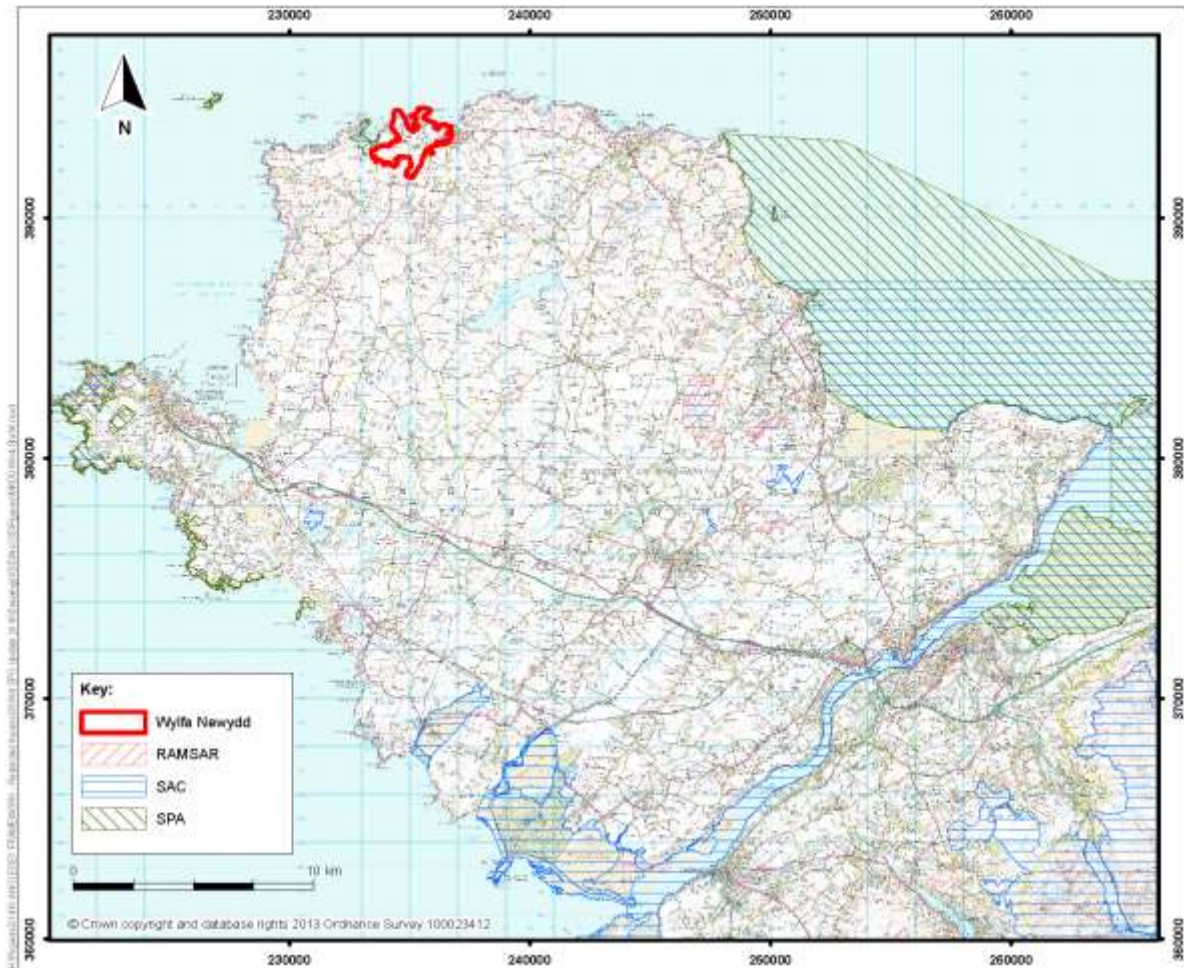
#### Biodiversity

- 3.2.1 Anglesey has a rich and varied biodiversity resource across its terrestrial, marine and coastal environments, the importance of which is reflected by the number of internationally and nationally designated sites.

#### European Designated Sites

- 3.2.2 Sites of European importance are designated to conserve natural habitats and species of wildlife which are rare, endangered or vulnerable in the European Community. In the UK, these form part of the 'Natura 2000' network of sites protected under the EC Habitats Directive (1992). **Figure 3.1** shows the distribution of European sites across the Island which includes 8 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), 3 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and 1 Ramsar site. The proposed Wylfa Newydd main site is located near two European designated sites; Cemlyn Bay SAC and the Ynys Feurig, the Skerries and Cemlyn Bay SPA. The SPA is the closest to the Wylfa Newydd main site and comprises three separate areas of importance for four species of breeding terns. The three areas are treated as a single site as a consequence of regular movement by birds between the component parts.

Figure 3.1 European Designated Sites



3.2.3 Trends in Natura 2000 (Wales) monitoring data show that the percentage of species and habitats in favourable, recovering or unfavourable condition has remained fairly static in recent years. Over half of all species and habitats have been in unfavourable condition and remain so according to 2010 data.

#### Nationally Designated Sites

3.2.4 Anglesey contains 4 National Nature Reserves and 64 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). These are listed in Appendix 7 of the JLDP and shown in Figure 3.2. The four National Nature Reserves include:

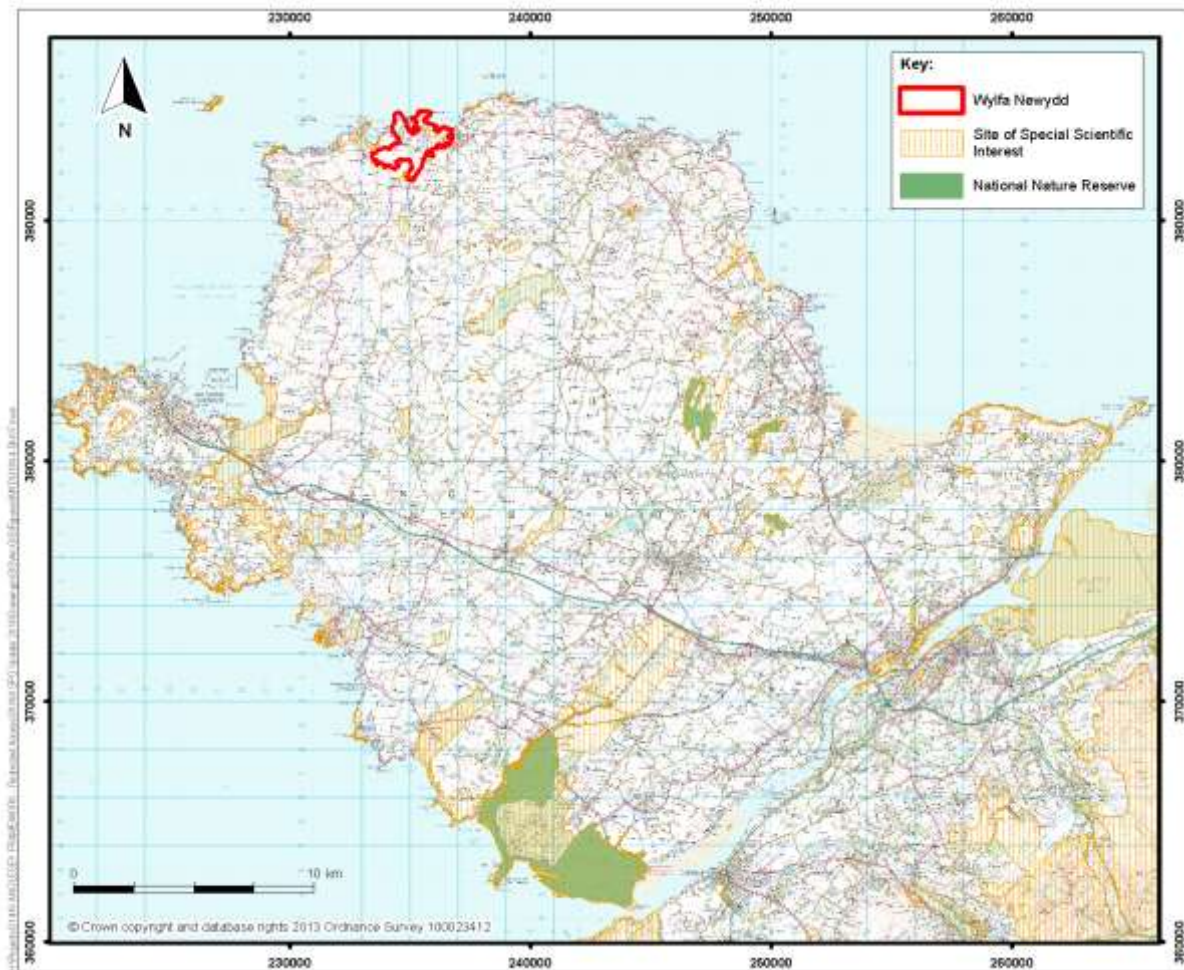
- Cors Erddreiniog - is the largest of the Anglesey fens;
- Cors Goch - one of several lowland fens on Anglesey;
- Cors Bodeilio – a unique mire, which lies in a shallow limestone valley; and

- Newborough Warren & Ynys Llanddwyn - also contains important geological features – the pre-Cambrian rocks (some of the oldest in the country).
- 3.2.5 Pressures upon National Nature Reserves (NNRs) which relate to development plans include climate change, invasive species, drainage problems, nutrient enrichment from external water sources, changes to water levels, coastal development and flood defences, and poor water quality.
- 3.2.6 Tre'r Gof SSSI, a rich-fen wetland habitat vulnerable to changes to water quality or quantity, is located within the Wylfa Newydd main site boundary and Cae Gwyn SSSI is located immediately south of the main site. The Welsh Government has set a target that by 2026 all statutory sites will be in favourable condition (the most recent data shows that on Anglesey 1,412 ha of SSSI management units requiring actions are under appropriate conservation management, i.e. 18% of the total area of SSSI management units on Anglesey)<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Email from NRW dated 13 October 2017

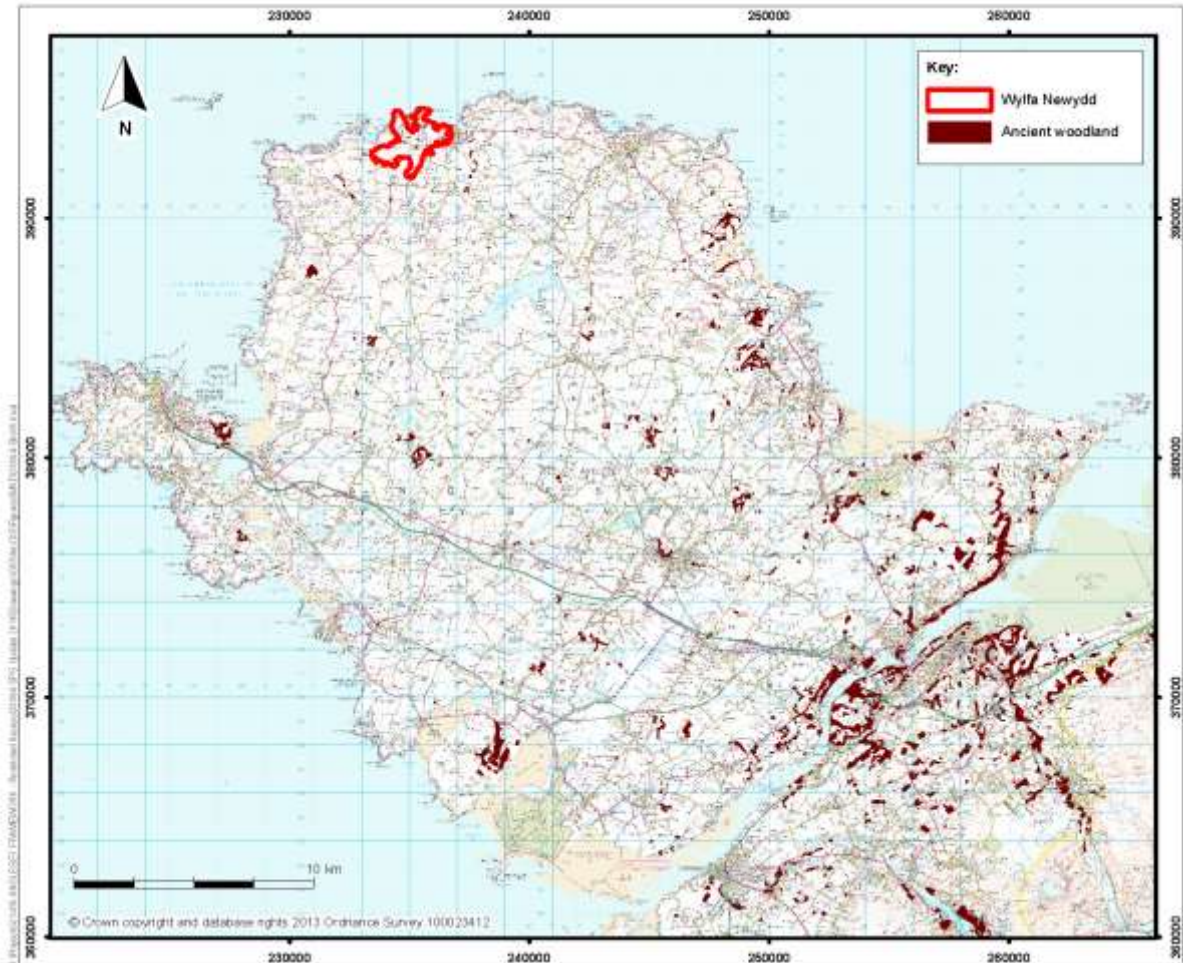
Figure 3.2 Nationally Designated Sites



### Ancient Woodland

3.2.7 The woodland cover on Anglesey is very low when compared to other parts of Wales or Europe at 3.5% of the land area compared to an average of 13% for Wales and 33% for the EU. Much of the woodland is fragmented occurring in isolated blocks providing a limited habitat for locally rare animal, bird and plant species. Ancient and semi-natural woodland is a particularly rare resource; there is less than 250 hectares on Anglesey, less than 0.5% of the land area. **Figure 3.3** shows the distribution of Ancient Woodland across the Island.

Figure 3.3 Ancient Woodland



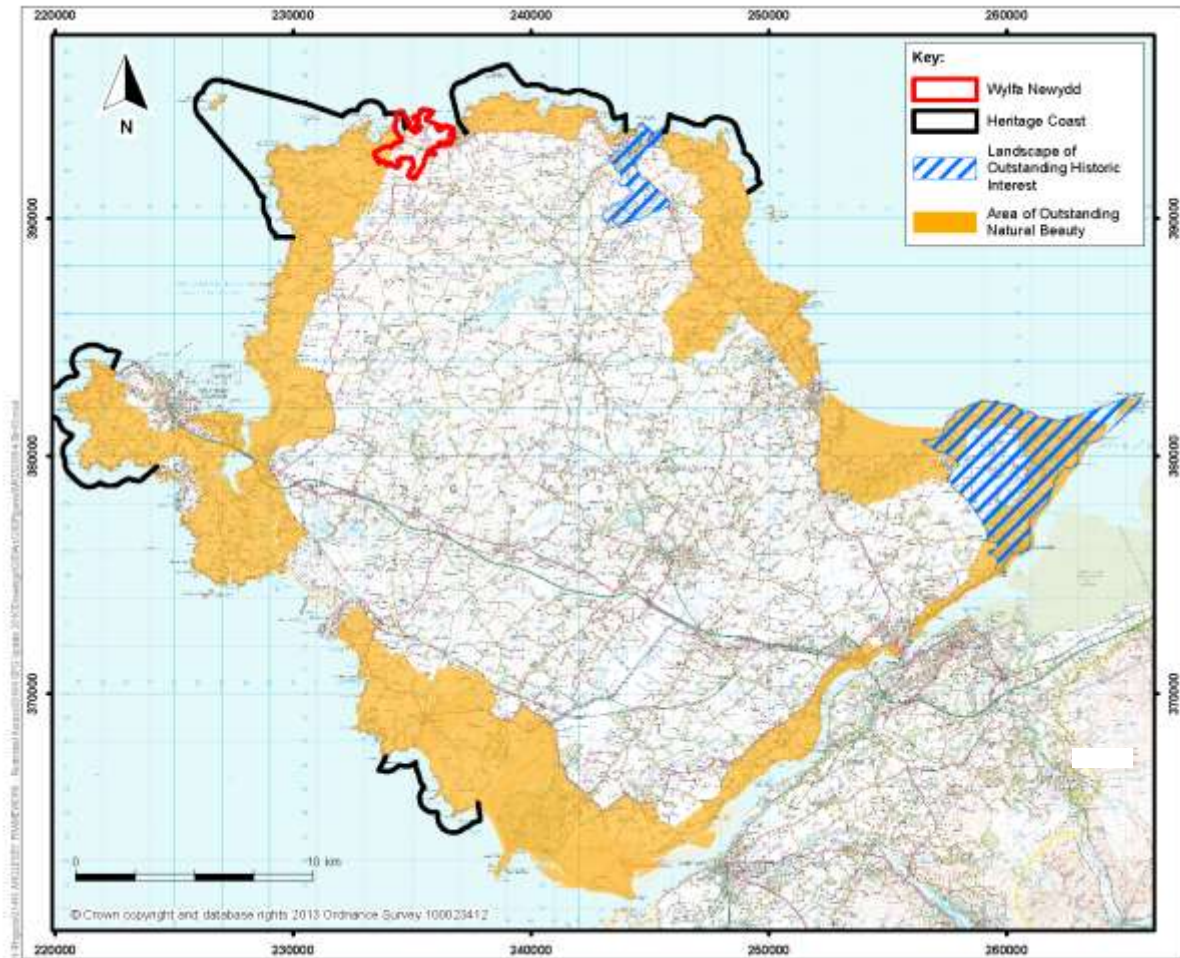
### Non-statutory Protected Sites and Other Biodiversity

- 3.2.8 There are 5 Local Nature Reserves (Coed Cynrol, Cytir Mawr/Llandegfan, Llanddona Common, Llangoed Common, Trwyn yr Wylfa/Wylfa Head and The Dingle). IACC has also identified Wildlife Sites (WS) that have been adopted as non-statutory Wildlife Sites in the JLDP.
- 3.2.9 Anglesey has a number of priority (Anglesey Local BAP) habitats including Lowland and Coastal Heath, Reed beds, Fens, Broadleaved Woodlands, Ancient and Species Rich Hedgerows, Ponds and Flower-rich Road Verges. Anglesey has some of the most extensive Sand Dunes in Wales. Rare and protected species on Anglesey include the Great Crested Newt, Red Squirrel, Otter, Water Vole and Chough, all with their own species action plans. The Anglesey coastline provides important nursery grounds for bass and flatfish species, and there are important local populations of migratory salmonids.

## Landscape and Seascape

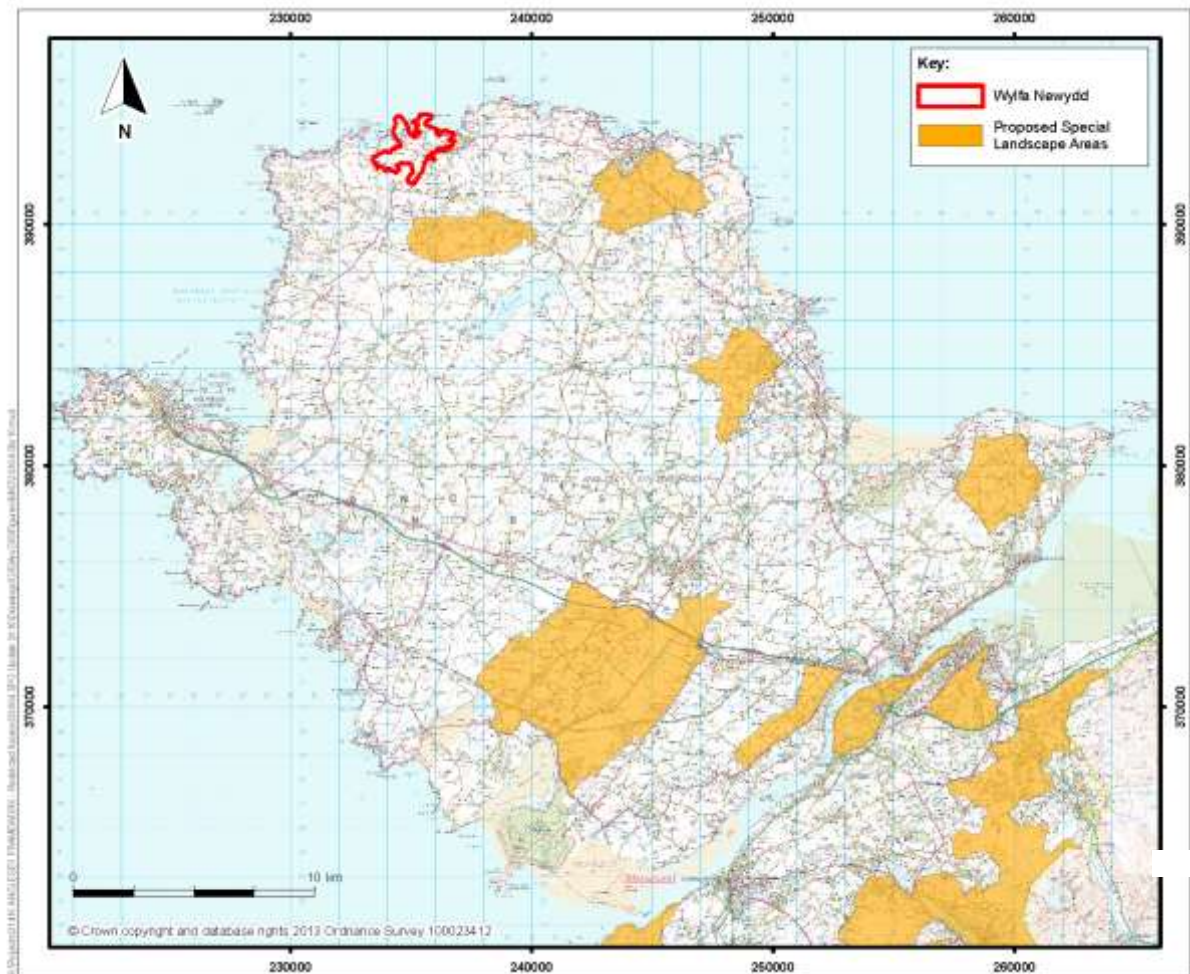
- 3.2.10 Almost the entire coastline of Anglesey is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) due to the variety of fine coastal landscapes. Varied habitats, from marine heaths to mud-flats, also give the AONB a high level of marine, botanical and ornithological interest. The total coverage of the Anglesey AONB is approximately 221sq km (21,500 hectares).
- 3.2.11 The AONB coincides with stretches of Heritage Coast. Heritage Coasts are non-statutory national landscape designations which exist to protect the areas of undeveloped coastline from development and also make them accessible to the public for recreation and enjoyment. There are three Heritage Coasts in Anglesey which coincide with the AONB (see **Figure 3.4**). These are: The North Anglesey Heritage Coast which consists of three sections that run for 18 miles along the northwest and northern shores of the Isle of Anglesey from Church Bay in the west to Dulas Bay in the east; Holyhead Mountain Heritage Coast which runs up the western shore of Holy Island from the bathing beaches of Trearddur Bay to the cliffs at North Stack; and Aberffraw Bay Heritage Coast in the south which encompasses a coastline of sand dunes.
- 3.2.12 Two areas within the AONB are listed in the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales: Amlwch and Parys Mountain and Penmon (see **Figure 3.4**).

Figure 3.4 National Landscape Designations



3.2.12 There are several Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) on Anglesey, designated in the recently adopted JLDP (see Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5 JLDP Special Landscape Areas



- 3.2.13 Parts of the Anglesey AONB lie within the proposed Wylfa Newydd main site and adjoin some of the associated development sites. The North Anglesey Heritage Coast lies in close proximity to the Wylfa Newydd site and the boundary of Snowdonia National Park is approximately 36km southeast of the site. The site is also located within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 4: North West Coast. The Isle of Anglesey Landscape Strategy Update (2011) identifies several key issues for this LCA which are summarised in **Box 3.1**.



**Box 3.1 Landscape Character Area 4: Key Issues****Coastal Landscapes**

The area includes a range of cliffs and coves. Any development or management proposals should take into account:

- Any direct or indirect impacts upon the range of habitat types;
- Given its interrelationship with the AONB, any proposals must consider the impact upon people's perceptions of the character and quality of the coast;
- Work closely with key landowners, such as the National Trust; and
- Have regard to the AONB Management Plan.

**Habitat Management**

New development and management proposals should seek to:

- Maintain high quality and distinctive habitats – coastal edge, mires, fens; and
- Develop and enhance the existing habitat and link with local Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

**Settlement**

Although only a few settlements lie within the LCA, it is important that any development proposals should:

- Be of a form and character that reflects each settlement;
- Be considered within terms of cumulative impacts upon the wider landscape;
- Integrate the development using land form, vegetation patterns etc;
- Do not impose standard solutions; and
- Have regard to Cemaes Bay Conservation Area SPG.

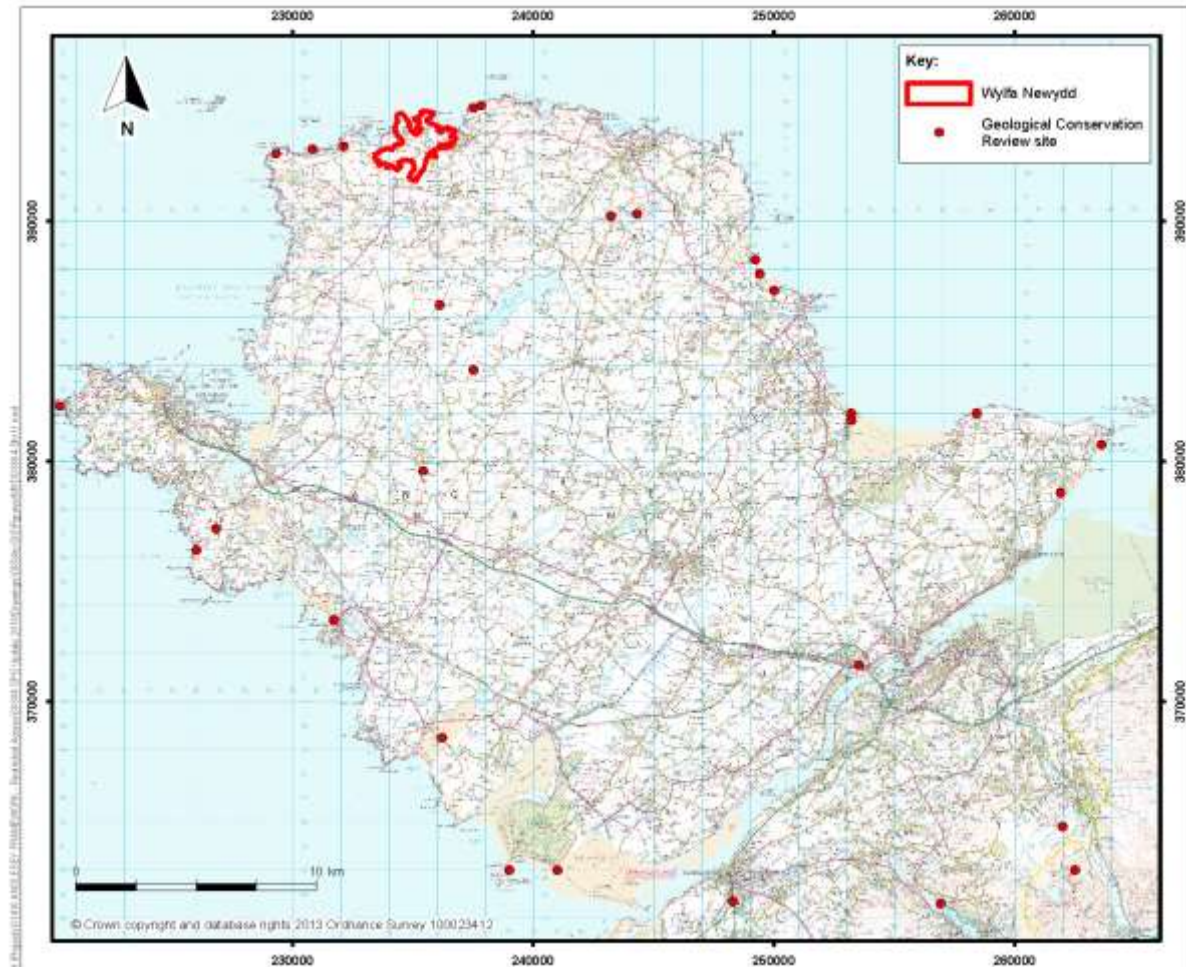
- 3.2.14 Although not designated in the same way as the AONB, seascapes are a highly valued part of the Welsh scenery; they also contain some of the last 'wild' landscape areas and support a wealth of natural heritage. Seascapes can loosely be defined as "*An area of sea, coastline and land as perceived by people, whose character results from the actions and interactions of land and sea, by natural and/or human factors*" (CCW 2010). Coastal protected landscapes are identified as key components of nationally important seascapes requiring appropriate management. The Seascape Assessment of Wales 2010 and the Anglesey Seascape Character Assessment (2013), and CCW (now NRW's) Regional Seascape Assessment RSU7 all inform the matters relating to the landscapes and seascapes of Anglesey.

## Geology and Soils

### Geology

- 3.2.15 The solid geology of Anglesey is noted for its variety, from the ancient Precambrian rocks at South Stack, to the unique outcrops of Sandstone in Lligwy Bay, and Carboniferous Limestone around Penmon. The Isle of Anglesey is a UNESCO endorsed geopark, named GeoMôn. A Geopark is a territory with a geological heritage of European significance and a sustainable development strategy with a strong management structure. It aims to protect geodiversity, to promote geological heritage to the general public as well as to support sustainable economic development of geopark territories primarily through the development of geological tourism.
- 3.2.16 The Minerals Resource Map highlights that the most commonly found mineral resources are granites, sandstone, quartzites, sub-alluvial deposits and limestone. Blown sand also occurs in dune fields on the Island although no resources have been identified at the existing Wylfa site. The Landscape Strategy highlights that the existing Wylfa site is located within the North West Coast Landscape Character Area, which has been assessed as having moderate geological value.
- 3.2.17 The importance of Anglesey's geology has been recognised through the protection of several sites as either Geological Conservation Review sites (GCR) or Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphologic Sites (RIGGS). GCR's are nationally important sites, protected by law as Geological SSSIs. There are 26 GCR's in the Anglesey AONB, including Rhoscolyn, Carmel Head and Llanddwyn Island as shown in **Figure 3.6**. The AONB also includes 31 RIGGS including Point Lynas, The Skerries, Church Bay and the Beaumaris Dykes.

Figure 3.6 Geological Conservation Review Sites

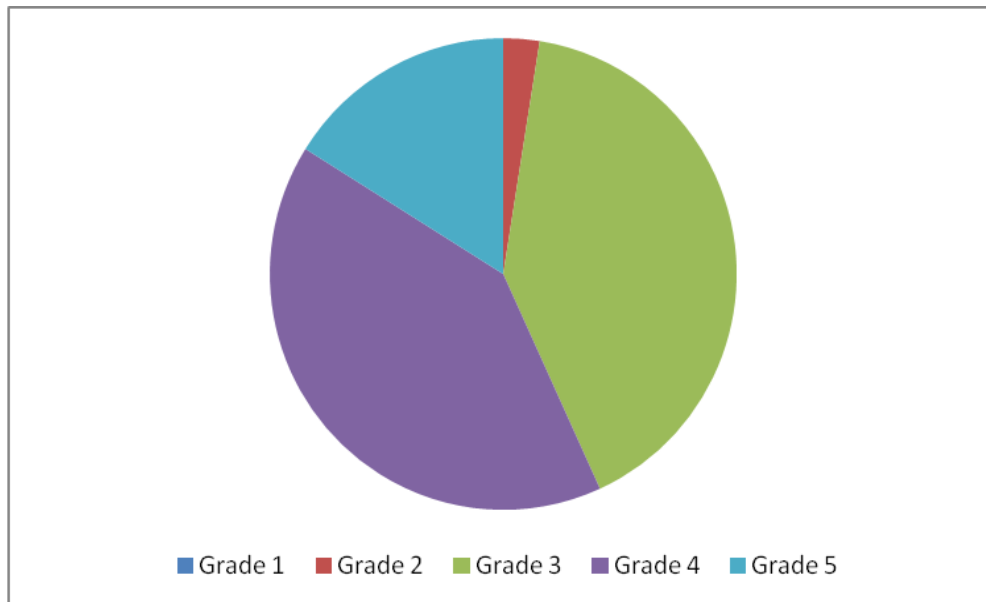


## Soils

3.2.18 Soils perform a number of valuable functions, or ecosystem services including: nutrient cycling, water regulation, carbon storage, and support for biodiversity and wildlife. The Agricultural Land Classification System developed by Defra provides a method for assessing the quality of farmland, principally for use in land use planning. The system divides the quality of land into five categories, as well as non-agricultural and urban. The majority of agricultural land on Anglesey is either Grade 3 (Moderate Quality) or Grade 4 (Poor Quality). However, there are small pockets of Grade 2 (Very Good Quality) mainly on the eastern side of the Island (see **Figure 3.7**). There is no Grade 1 (Excellent Quality) agricultural land on the Island<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> The diversity of soil types including soilscape found across Anglesey can be viewed on web based datasets from Cranfield University's LandIS database [www.landis.org.uk](http://www.landis.org.uk). The National Soil Map for England and Wales (National Soil Resources Institute (NSRI) provides information on soils. J S Conway (Soils in the Welsh Landscape) provides a further insight to the nature and range of soils on Anglesey. A soil carbon density map is available from Welsh Government.

**Figure 3.7 Agricultural Land Classification on Anglesey**



Source: Defra (2002) Agricultural Land Classification

3.2.19 Anglesey has low soil carbon density, in line with wider trends where there has been a gradual loss of carbon from soils in England and Wales which can be attributed to many factors including climate change.

### Water

3.2.20 Rivers, lakes and coastal waters on and surrounding the Isle of Anglesey are assessed as having moderate to good water quality. Anglesey is situated in the North Eryri - Ynys Mon Water Resource Zone which the current draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) 2013 produced by Welsh Water forecasts as being potentially in deficit by 2023/24, principally due to the large uncertainty in the supply and demand balance resulting from climate change.

3.2.21 The Environment Agency's River Basin Management Plan for the Western Wales River Basin District notes that 26% of rivers and lakes were in good ecological and chemical status overall. However, there are a number of river stretches where the quality of water needs to be significantly improved, and there are a number of challenges to surface water quality including: diffuse pollution from agricultural activities; diffuse pollution from historical mines; physical modification of water bodies; point source pollution from water industry sewage works; and acidification.

3.2.22 Many of the rivers in north-west Wales support important salmon and sea trout fisheries and progress has been made in opening up rivers to migration and improving

river habitats. The importance of rivers to migratory fish is also closely linked to the conditions for these species in the associated marine waters.

- 3.2.23 The overall standard of bathing water around the Anglesey coastline is improving. In Anglesey in 2016, all bathing waters achieved ‘sufficient’, ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ standard with the exception of Cemaes beach. This failed to comply with the Directive standards and an action plan is in place to address the casual factors associated with this failure. In Anglesey, 6 beaches achieved Blue Flag Awards with a further 5 beaches obtaining Seaside Awards in 2017.

### 3.3 Future Trends

- 3.3.1 Future trends relating to the natural environment of Anglesey and the Wylfa Newydd Project are summarised below:

- Increasing and potentially conflicting pressures and demands on ecosystem services, resources (such as water) allied with an increased focus on the role of ecosystems in the landscape and in particular the services they provide i.e. ecosystem goods and services to society;
- Climate change and cumulative effects on the natural environment, including for example changes in the distribution of species and habitats, inward migration of invasive or non-native species, land erosion, changes to agriculture, water availability, requirements for coastal defences. The National Coastal Erosion Mapping Project highlights that the current policy is to ‘hold the line’ in terms of managing the defences at the existing Wylfa site. Off site, the current policy generally is ‘no active intervention’ although there are areas of managed realignment including along coastal areas to the east of the existing site. This aspect is addressed in more detail in the Climate Change Topic Paper;
- Integration of policy and legislation across different topic areas, for example in relation to the natural environment and economics, to promote sustainability;
- Water resource management controls through Dwr Cymru and Natural Resources Wales to meet potentially competing demands. Increasing pressures from competing uses on supply and water quality;
- Requirement for cooling water intake and discharges from the Wylfa Newydd Project and impacts on the shoreline environment, local marine waters marine ecosystems. The Anglesey coastline provides important nursery grounds for bass and flatfish species, and there are important local populations of migratory salmonids. The return of cooling water to the sea at elevated temperatures could have adverse effects on coastal processes including sediment transport

and water quality. Discharges could cause failures to existing water quality standards and indirectly affect nationally and internationally designated habitats;

- Requirement for more and better green networks to offset habitat fragmentation and isolation of species populations and to protect biodiversity;
- Protection of important landscapes, including as part of this: views; movement (Public Rights of Way); biodiversity; water management; landscape patterns; landscape features; trees and vegetation. The existing Wylfa site is located within the North West Coast Landscape Character Area;
- Changes in land management and requirement to protect soil resources. The Environment Strategy for Wales has identified a target to manage soil to safeguard its ability to support plants and animals, store carbon, and provide other important ecosystem services;
- Emphasis on biosecurity as an integral part of development management;
- Wastewater management in relation to the large number of construction workers required for the Wylfa Newydd Project and potential discharge impacts on biodiversity and protected sites (including bathing water sites and shellfish water sites), and increased risk to fluvial and sewer flooding; and
- Surface water runoff control from construction sites (including associated development) and protection of the receiving environment, including soils/water pathways.

### 3.4 Key Issues for the Wylfa Newydd SPG

- 3.4.1 Based on the findings of the baseline analysis and evidence base, a number of key issues relevant to the natural environment have been identified that will need to be considered in preparing the Wylfa Newydd SPG. These issues are summarised in **Box 3.2** below.

**Box 3.2 Key Issues for the Wylfa Newydd SPG: Natural Environment**

- Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, soils and geodiversity including designated sites and protected species;
- Protection of landscape and views, in particular seascapes and designated and important landscapes;
- Protection and enhancement of water resources and blue infrastructure (including rivers, streams and other waterbodies);
- Protection of the marine and coastal environment, including water quality and shoreline habitats and the species they support;
- Place sustainable management at the heart of protecting and enhancing the natural environment for the future;
- Positive contributions to the development of green and blue infrastructure as part of the development of the main site and associated developments;
- If necessary, provision for water supply infrastructure to meet newly arising demand from the Wylfa Newydd Project including associated developments;
- Integration of the emerging ecosystem services approach to guidance;
- Integration of natural environment considerations into wider economic and social assessments;
- Address the future quality of the natural environment alongside emerging issues such as climate change;
- Provision for future coastline management, bathing water quality and heritage coast protection;
- Consider cumulative impacts arising from the Wylfa Newydd Project in-combination with other proposals, plans and programmes.

## 4 Challenges and Opportunities

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Based on the review of plans and programmes presented in **Section 2** and analysis of the baseline and future trends in **Section 3**, this section draws together the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to the natural environment to be addressed by the Wylfa Newydd SPG. Where appropriate, it also provides guidance in respect of how the SPG could respond to the issues identified in order to help inform the preparation of the document.

### 4.2 SWOT Analysis

4.2.1 **Table 4.1** presents an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with the Wylfa Newydd Project during construction and operation on the natural environment and in the context of the Wylfa Newydd SPG.

**Table 4.1 SWOT Analysis**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internationally and nationally important landscapes, heritage coast, geodiversity and nature conservation sites;</li> <li>Strong sense of community and place linked to the natural environment; and</li> <li>Contribution made by the natural environment to tourism and economic benefits;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion of designated sites in unfavourable condition;</li> <li>Challenges to the quality of surface water, including: diffuse pollution, physical modifications, to aquatic environments; source point pollution and acidification;</li> <li>Decline or slow improvements in populations of protected species and local biodiversity;</li> <li>Predicted future water supply deficit;</li> <li>Exposure to flood risk and changes to coastal and geomorphic processes; and</li> <li>Spread of non-native or invasive species, pests and diseases adversely affecting local biodiversity, land use and agriculture.</li> </ul>



Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating better and new green/blue networks and habitats;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential impacts on seascapes, landscape character and protected landscapes;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing the natural environment through pro-active measures;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential impacts on designated sites and protected species;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopting an ecosystems approach to assessing impacts and designing integrated and sustainable mitigation for the long term;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional demand for water in a Water Resource Zone that is comparatively supply-constrained;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating good design, related to the wider landscape and seascape;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts on marine waters and shoreline environment including fish and aquatic habitats and species;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating guidance, addressing the natural environment alongside economic, social and other topics;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cumulative pressures on environmental resources;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopting long-term and sustainable measures to 'build in' resilience to cope with future environmental change;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competing land use pressures on vulnerable or threatened biodiversity and geodiversity;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a permanent legacy of benefit to the natural environment and the ecosystem services supporting the community; and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil loss or loss of function through development and changes in land management;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term monitoring of mitigation and enhancement measures providing valuable datasets and 'lessons learned' for the future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for diffuse pollution through soil /water pathways (ground and surface waters);</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indirect impacts on biodiversity through impacts on soils and water quality;</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss or degradation of important or protected biodiversity and geodiversity;</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change and flood risk;</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="810 360 1353 568">• Conflicting demands on the natural environment’s capacity to provide economic, recreational and amenity resources as well as maintaining or enhancing biodiversity value; and</li> <li data-bbox="810 595 1385 712">• Biosecurity – introduction of non-native or invasive species or pests and diseases during development.</li> </ul>

### 4.3 Summary of Key Matters to be addressed by the SPG

4.3.1 Key matters for the natural environment relate to:

- Biodiversity;
- Geodiversity;
- Landscape;
- Seascape;
- Soils;
- Water resources and water quality; and
- Coastline and coastal waters.

4.3.2 All of these elements are inter-related and will need to be protected and enhanced in line with legislative and policy requirements over the long term to achieve sustainable and resilient outcomes with the capacity to accommodate change. This is particularly relevant for the natural environment which is subject to many sources of influence and interaction and is likely to change over time.

### 4.4 How Should the Wylfa Newydd SPG Respond?

4.4.1 The Wylfa Newydd SPG will need to consider how the natural environment can be managed in an integrated and sustainable way, along with social and economic issues, addressing the intrinsic value of the natural environment alongside the contribution

made by it in terms of community well-being, a sense of place, tourism, agriculture and recreation.

- 4.4.2 The SPG should be informed by, consistent with, and support existing policies and plans, reflecting a wider move towards a more integrated approach to management of the natural environment. This illustrated in *'Sustaining a Living Wales'* Green Paper (January 2012) setting out a fresh approach to the management and regulation of the environment in Wales, and also the Written Statement on Water Policy in Wales (December 2011) which recognises the connection between a high quality water environment, a healthy ecosystem and services for people and species.
- 4.4.3 The SPG should reflect policies of the JLDP including Strategic Policy PS14 (Conserving and Enhancing the Local Environment), which seeks to manage development so as to conserve and, where possible, enhance the Plan Area's distinctive natural environment, countryside and coastline and to safeguard protected species and enhance their habitats.
- 4.4.4 While the Wylfa Newydd Project will address all relevant legislative and policy obligations and these need not be repeated in the SPG, emphasis should be placed on the importance of taking opportunities to enhance the natural environment as well as protecting designated features and assets.
- 4.4.5 The potential impacts of the Wylfa Newydd Project on the natural environment should encompass all associated works and development off-site, and possible cumulative impacts arising from all elements of the Project plus other developments and projects in the wider area.
- 4.4.6 More specifically, the SPG should include guidance that addresses:
- Long term sustainable protection, and wherever possible, enhancement of key habitats, biodiversity, landscapes and seascapes, taking into account the possible implications of climate change and key resources such as soil and water, and bio-security protection. Where negative effects are identified, mitigation and compensation requirements may include on or off-site habitat creation or enhancement to compensate for temporary or residual effects arising from the Wylfa Newydd Project;
  - Protection and conservation of soils in relation to the ecosystem services they provide. Locational guidance should also look to direct new development towards previously developed land and areas of lower agricultural land quality;

- Protection and conservation of geodiversity - geological and geomorphological assets, including protected sites such as RIGS and in particular in relation to the Geopark status of parts of Anglesey;
- Protection of water resources (quantity and quality), riparian habitats and aquatic species, including migratory fish populations. Subject to further analysis, the guidance should highlight any need to address water supply-demand deficit arising from the Wylfa Newydd Project (e.g. by encouraging the adoption of water efficiency measures in new development and identifying the need for new water supply infrastructure);
- Creation or strengthening of green (land) and blue (water) networks or infrastructure;
- Linkages between other plans and policies to ensure a consistent and integrated approach;
- Inter-relationships between the natural environment and issues for the Wylfa Newydd Project including flood risk management, coastal protection, water quantity/quality and tourism. For example, this may include measures such as linking spatial planning on land with spatial planning at sea to ensure the best protection and use of the resources, in line with the objectives of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Wales and guidance on the promotion of the natural environment to enhance tourism;
- Protection of important landscapes and, if this is not possible, compensation for impacts on landscape, views, movement of people through the landscape, including a contribution to the strengthening of networks and links to enhance the experience of local communities and visitors enjoying the countryside, using public rights of way and greenspace;
- The critical requirement for permanent legacy provision to protect, enhance and maintain the natural environment as a whole, and in particular the integrity of Natura 2000 sites and supporting favourable conservation status of SSSIs. Part of the legacy provision should include on-going monitoring of effects and outcomes of mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures to guide future management, ensure objectives are achieved, and to provide information and 'lessons learned' for future initiatives; and
- The potential for cumulative impacts on the natural environment, whether from different elements of the Wylfa Newydd Project or in combination with other schemes or projects and changes to the natural environment over time,

ensuring that cumulative impacts associated with the Project are fully assessed and mitigated where required.



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