

SCOTTISHPOWER  
RENEWABLES

# East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO Offshore Windfarms

## Effects with Regard to the Statutory Purposes of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Accordance with NPS Policy

Applicants: East Anglia ONE North Limited and East Anglia TWO Limited

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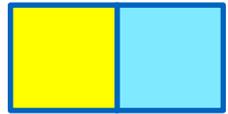
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Applicable to **East Anglia ONE North** and **East Anglia TWO**



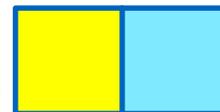
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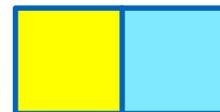
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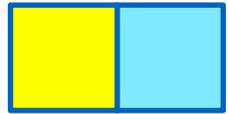
## Glossary of Acronyms

|         |                                                            |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| AONB    | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty                         |
| NPS     | National Policy Statement                                  |
| Km      | Kilometre                                                  |
| m       | Metre                                                      |
| APP     | Application Document                                       |
| PD      | Procedural Decision                                        |
| ExA     | Examining Authority                                        |
| DCO     | Development Consent Order                                  |
| NE      | Natural England                                            |
| RR      | Relevant Representation                                    |
| EA2     | East Anglia TWO                                            |
| EA1N    | East Anglia ONE North                                      |
| CroW    | Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000                     |
| NSIP    | Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project              |
| LIR     | Local Impact Report                                        |
| PEIR    | Preliminary Environmental Impact Report                    |
| ES      | Environmental Statement                                    |
| SDNP    | South Downs National Park                                  |
| EIA     | Environmental Impact Report                                |
| SPP     | Scottish Planning Policy                                   |
| LCT     | Landscape Character Type                                   |
| HDD     | Horizontal Directional Drilling                            |
| CCS     | Construction Consolidation Site                            |
| LVIA    | Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment                     |
| SSSI    | Site of Special Scientific Interest                        |
| SAC     | Special Area of Conservation                               |
| SPA     | Special Protected Area                                     |
| OLEMS   | Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan           |
| SCHAONB | Suffolk Coast and Heath Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |



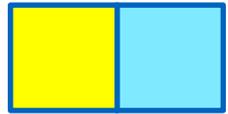
## Glossary of Terminology

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Applicant                           | East Anglia TWO Limited / East Anglia ONE North Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| East Anglia ONE North project       | The proposed project consisting of up to 67 wind turbines, up to four offshore electrical platforms, up to one construction, operation and maintenance platform, inter-array cables, platform link cables, up to one operational meteorological mast, up to two offshore export cables, fibre optic cables, landfall infrastructure, onshore cables and ducts, onshore substation, and National Grid infrastructure. |
| East Anglia TWO project             | The proposed project consisting of up to 75 wind turbines, up to four offshore electrical platforms, up to one construction, operation and maintenance platform, inter-array cables, platform link cables, up to one operational meteorological mast, up to two offshore export cables, fibre optic cables, landfall infrastructure, onshore cables and ducts, onshore substation, and National Grid infrastructure. |
| East Anglia ONE North windfarm site | The offshore area within which wind turbines and offshore platforms will be located.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| East Anglia TWO windfarm site       | The offshore area within which wind turbines and offshore platforms will be located.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |



# 1 Executive Summary

1. This Clarification Note provides further confirmation of the position regarding the potential for the Projects to bring about effects on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A full summary of the effects on the AONB identified for the Projects is set out in **Appendix 1**. An overview of the effects is set out in section 2 of this report.
2. For each Project the potential effects of the onshore and offshore elements of the development were considered separately. Regarding the onshore elements, the **Development Consent and Planning Statement** (APP-579) confirmed that some significant landscape and visual effects on the AONB had been identified in relation to both Projects in their Environmental Statements, and this related to the ***‘temporary and short term physical loss of hedgerows and scrub-heathland habitat during construction’***.
3. Regarding the offshore elements, the **Development Consent and Planning Statements** (APP-579) confirmed that the potential effects on the AONB identified within the Projects’ Environmental Statements (ES) was different for each project. Specifically, there were no significant effects on the AONB identified in relation to the offshore elements of the East Anglia ONE North project. For the East Anglia TWO project, which lies closer to the coastline, some significant effects on the AONB were identified for the offshore elements including in relation to its individual ‘special qualities’.
4. In examining and determining the application, the ExA and the decision maker will wish to be satisfied not only that the statutory duty to have regard to the purpose of the AONB has been fulfilled, but also that the tests set out in the relevant National Policy Statements (NPSs) with regard to AONBs have been met, specifically, that projects have been designed “sensitively” and “to avoid compromising the purposes of designation”, the key test for development outside of an AONB as in this case, as set out in NPS EN-1 paragraph 5.9.12.
5. The Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) contained within the ES, have identified that the significant effects on views from the coastal edge of the AONB looking out to sea, arise along parts of the coastline between Southwold and the north side of Orford Ness. The significant effects on views across the coast and seascape are limited to specific locations along its length as set out in the ES and are not of a high magnitude or seen continuously along this coastline. Due to this and the context in which these occur, (where energy infrastructure such as existing offshore windfarms and Sizewell Nuclear Power Station are already a

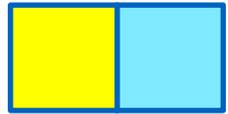


recognised component of these views as experienced by those walking along this length of coastline), neither the Natural Beauty nor the purposes of designation of the AONB will be compromised by the changes to these views and the magnitude of that change, nor will its integrity be undermined.

6. In summary, the Projects have had due regard to statutory purpose of the AONB and with regard to relevant NPS policy, as demonstrated in the application and ES:

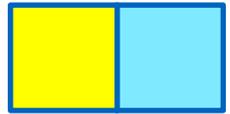
- Effects on the AONB have been minimised in the preparation of the application, through reduction of the site area of the offshore elements and through the location, and routing of the onshore elements, including all cabling being underground;
- Effects have been further minimised through reduction in turbine tip height from a maximum of 300m to a maximum of 282m post submission;
- NPS EN-1 only requires minimising of effects through siting and design alterations taking into account “operational and other constraints”;
- NPS EN-1 also already envisages development in and visible from AONBs will occur thus accepting effects will be necessary;
- Residual effects on the AONB, resulting from views of turbines out to sea and beyond the seascape horizon, would remain from a number of locations along the coastline, but would occur only in certain weather and visibility conditions and therefore on limited occasions during the year;
- A vast and open seascape with wide panoramic views would remain;
- The development would not interrupt or block views due to its location more than 30km offshore, beyond the very distant skyline and could not interrupt views of the sweep of seascape leading up to it;
- The residual effects are therefore not sufficient in magnitude or frequency to compromise the purposes of designation or undermine the integrity of the AONB and its Natural Beauty will be maintained;

7. Consequently, no effects are of such a magnitude or are significant enough on their own or cumulatively to compromise the purposes of designation of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and the Projects are therefore in accordance with relevant NPS policy on AONBs.



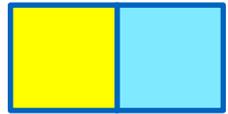
## 2 Introduction

8. This clarification note has been prepared on behalf of East Anglia TWO Limited and East Anglia ONE North Limited (the Applicants) to clarify aspects of the East Anglia TWO and East Anglia ONE North Development Consent Order (DCO) applications (the Applications).
9. This clarification note considers the potential for the East Anglia TWO and East Anglia ONE North projects (the Projects) to bring about effects on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB) with regard to the policy context which is applicable for the Projects.
10. This document is applicable to both the East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO DCO applications, and therefore is endorsed with the yellow and blue icon used to identify materially identical documentation in accordance with the Examining Authority's (ExA) procedural decisions on document management of 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 (PD-004). Whilst this document has been submitted to both Examinations, if it is read for one project submission there is no need to read it for the other project submission.
11. This note has been prepared by Brian Denney, a Chartered Landscape Architect and Fellow of the Landscape Institute and Chartered Environmentalist. Brian is also a Member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and Registered as a Principal Environmental Impact Assessment Practitioner. Brian has more than 35 years of experience in the assessment of a wide range of development projects throughout the UK ranging from renewable energy and other energy development projects to new settlements and major housing, commercial retail, leisure and sports development ( including sports stadiums ) as well as transport and other infrastructure developments. Many of these development projects involved the assessment of the potential impacts on AONB's and their Special Qualities. This includes 15 years of experience in the consideration of renewable energy generation projects and their landscape and visual effects, including impacts upon World Heritage sites, National Parks and AONB landscapes alongside National and Regional Scenic Areas in Scotland and Scottish Wild Land and he has undertaken these assessments in relation to the landscapes of England, Scotland, Wales and the Isle of Man. He is also experienced in undertaking onshore wind energy feasibility studies and design, especially in relation to the deployment of large typography turbines. Brian is also an expert witness having given evidence on more than 150 occasions at Public Inquiry in relation to the wide range of development projects listed above, including numerous wind energy developments in English, Scottish and Welsh landscapes. Brian was also the landscape Director within the team which



undertook the Seascape Assessment for the now constructed Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm off the North Norfolk coast.

12. In preparing this report Brian Denney has had regard to the position of Natural England as set out in their responses and summarised in **Appendix 1**. The position set out by Natural England is not accepted, but would not, if accepted, alter the findings or conclusions of the report, particularly in relation to the appropriate test that is required by policy and the conclusion that the effects would not compromise the purposes for designation.



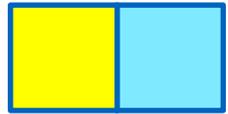
### 3 Overview of Effects on the AONB Identified for the East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO Projects

13. A full summary of the effects on the AONB identified for the Projects is set out in **Appendix 1**. An overview of the effects is set out below.
14. For each project the potential effects of the onshore and offshore elements of the development were considered separately. Regarding the onshore elements, the **Development Consent and Planning Statement** (APP-579) confirmed that some significant landscape and visual effects on the AONB had been identified in relation to both Projects in their Environmental Statements. Specifically, this related to the *'temporary and short term physical loss of hedgerows and scrub-heathland habitat during construction'* that would occur as a result of the landfall and 2.9km stretch of onshore cable route construction which falls within the AONB in the area referred to as **'Area A'** - between Thorpeness, Sizewell and Leiston.
15. Regarding the offshore elements, the **Development Consent and Planning Statements** (APP-579) confirmed that the potential effects on the AONB identified within the Projects' Environmental Statements was different for each project. Specifically, there were no significant effects on the AONB identified in relation to the offshore elements of the East Anglia ONE North project, which is proposed to be 37.7km from the coastline/AONB boundary. This was summarised as follows on page 291 of the **Development Consent and Planning Statement** for East Anglia ONE North:

*'With regards to natural heritage features, the effect of the construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure is assessed as not significant on all AONB natural heritage features special qualities...'*

*'The construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure may only result in some perceived changes to the skyline of offshore waters that form the backdrop to the low crumbling cliffs and banks of shingle beaches, but the appearance of a distant offshore windfarm influence would not change the fundamental characteristic of the dynamic coastline and geomorphological features of the coast, or the dynamic processes that will continue to fundamentally shape the coastal environment and its distinctiveness'.*

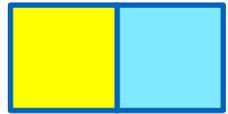
16. For the East Anglia TWO project, which would lie a little closer to the coastline, at 32.6km offshore, some significant effects on the AONB were identified for the



offshore elements, but these were all concluded to be of only medium magnitude. This included significant effects identified in relation to its individual 'special qualities' regarding 'Landscape Quality', 'Scenic Quality' and 'Relative Wildness'. However, it is of note that the **Development Consent and Planning Statement** (APP-579) also set out the following in Table 6.23, page 289, which replicates the conclusion provided at paragraph 340 of **Chapter 28 – Offshore Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the East Anglia TWO Environmental Statement (APP-076):

*'It is not the overall character or physical features of the coastal edges of the AONB that will be changed, but instead it is specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects of its character relating to panoramic views offshore at the coast that will experience change. The construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure will have a relatively low change to the strong overall character of the AONB and will not result in harm to the special qualities of the AONB in overall terms, with the varied and distinctive landscapes of the AONB continuing to define its overall and fundamental character.'*

17. The matter of the combined (or total) cumulative effect of the construction and operation of the East Anglia TWO and East Anglia ONE North projects on the AONB and its special qualities was also addressed in paragraphs 269 to 272 of **Chapter 28 – Offshore Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the East Anglia TWO Environmental Statement (APP-076).
18. It was set out at paragraph 269 that *'the cumulative effects on AONB special qualities are very similar to those set out for the project alone assessment of the East Anglia TWO windfarm site in Section 28.7.3.2.3 of this chapter'*. Specifically, it is assessed that *'there are no differences in the levels of magnitude of change or significance of effects on AONB special qualities set out in the project alone assessment' [for East Anglia TWO]*.



## 4 Matters Concerning the AONB Raised by Stakeholders

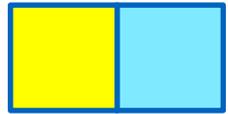
19. A multi-stakeholder workshop took place on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020, which included representatives from Natural England (NE), the AONB Partnership and Suffolk County Council / East Suffolk Council (the Councils).
20. During this workshop, NE/the AONB Partnership/the Councils essentially took the position that any significant effect on AONB special qualities equates to harm to the statutory purpose of the AONB.
21. This is in essence the position set out by NE in their **Relevant Representation** (NE-2.11 and NE-3.1.1) (RR-059), although it should be noted that this states that the 'statutory purpose of the AONB will be adversely affected by the EA2 proposal as it is currently configured' (it intentionally does not use the term 'harm').
22. NE's position with regards to 'statutory purpose' is also set out at NE-3.8.2 of their **Relevant Representation** (RR-059):

*'The statutory purpose of the AONB is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty; the seascape setting of the designation greatly contributes to its natural beauty and hence its statutory purpose. Offshore wind turbines which are predicted to have significant adverse effects do not contribute to this statutory purpose i.e. they will not conserve or enhance the seascape setting of the AONB. They will appear as incongruous man-made features and in-effect replicate in the northern area, the cluttered horizon of the southern portion, and with a visual effect judged to be significant'.*

*'The policy test for determining EA2 is set by NPS 1 and 5 with reference of the statutory purpose of the AONB'.*

23. The Applicants' response to NE Relevant Representation (NE 2-11) (AS-036), page 405) nevertheless made clear that on the basis of expert assessment, the East Anglia TWO windfarm site:

*'would not result in harm to the statutory purposes of the AONB, because it is not the overall character or physical features of the AONB that will be changed, but specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects of its character relating to panoramic views offshore from the coast that will experience change, with the varied and distinctive landscape of the AONB continuing to define its fundamental character'.*

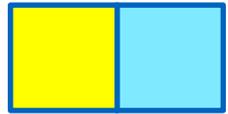


## 5 Examination and Decision Relating to the AONB

24. The ExA, and ultimately the Secretary of State in his decision, will want to be satisfied in respect of two main requirements upon the relationship of the Projects to the AONB:
- first, has regard been had to the purpose of the AONB, in line with the statutory duty, and
  - second, can it be concluded, on the balance of probabilities, that it would be in accordance with the NPS policy on AONBs to consent the Projects and that any adverse impact of the Projects would not outweigh their benefits.<sup>1</sup>
25. It is clear from the attention being paid to this matter in the Applications and pre-examination procedural decisions and from the representations made, that regard is indeed being had and is likely to be continued to be had through the process of the examination, to the statutory purpose of the AONB.
26. On the NPS policy consideration, the key test is set out in paragraph 5.9.12 of NPS EN-1 (emphasis added):
- ‘The duty to have regard to the purposes of nationally designated areas also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. The aim should be to **avoid compromising the purposes of designation** and such projects should be **designed sensitively given the various siting, operational and other relevant constraints**. This should include projects in England which may have impacts on National Scenic Areas in Scotland’*
27. This key test imposed here by NPS EN-1, of whether the purposes of designation would be compromised, is distinct from assessment of whether effects exist or are significant, as set out in the Environmental Statement. The NPS here poses a higher level planning policy test of whether the purposes of designation the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB as a whole would be compromised, such that, for example, it might no longer, as a result of the development, be designated as an AONB.
28. Concern around the specific AONB effects noted in the Environmental Statement has been raised in representations made. However, it is concluded in the application, based on detailed and expert environmental impact assessment, that

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<sup>1</sup> In line with and alongside the remaining duties set out in S104 Planning Act 2008.



significant effects on the AONB are few, are of no more than medium magnitude and

*“will not result in harm to the special qualities of the AONB in overall terms, with the varied and distinctive landscapes of the AONB continuing to define its overall and fundamental character”* (Development Consent and Planning Statement) (APP-579).

29. In addition, the Projects have a limited lifespan and thus effects on the AONB, while applicable to the operational phase of the Projects, although long term, **are temporary and reversible** in nature.
30. In line with both tests above, the following sections of this document set out **what the statutory purpose of the AONB (as opposed to a National Park for example) is**, to which the decision maker must have regard, the policy tests in the relevant NPSs, primarily that of not *“compromising the purposes of designation”*, and finally, whether this test is met, i.e. as distinct from whether or not they are significant, **whether any effect or harm does or does not compromise the purpose of designating the AONB.**

## 5.1 Duty to have Regard to Statutory Purpose

### 5.1.1 Statutory provisions and purpose of the AONB

31. The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 provided the framework for the establishment of National Parks and AONBs.
32. In turn, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) amended the provisions relating to AONBs. In summary the provisions confer:
  - a power on Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency), to designate an area as an AONB where an area’s outstanding natural beauty is such that it appears desirable to do so following consultation and by order, subject to the confirmation by the Secretary of State) (S82);

NB. Section 82(1) of CRoW defines an AONB in England as:

*“An area that is not in a National Park but which appears to Natural England to be of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable that the protective provisions of Part IV of The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 should apply to it for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the area’s natural beauty”*

The UK Government current online Guidance on AONBs confirms with regard to the above legislation that:

*“An area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) is land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). It protects the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty”*



- a power on the Secretary of State, subject to requirements for consultation, to confirm, confirm with modifications, vary, or revoke any such order (S83);
- a duty on Natural England to make any order available for public inspection (S83);
- a duty on NE to give advice on development matters (S84);
- a duty on local planning authorities to consult NE on development plans covering and on access agreements relating to land in an AONB (S84);
- a power on local planning authorities in AONBs to take actions to conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the area (S84);
- a general duty on public bodies i.e. “relevant authorities” including for example the Councils, statutory undertakers<sup>2</sup> and in the context of the DCO, the Secretary of State, as follows: *“(1) In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty”<sup>3</sup>* (S85);

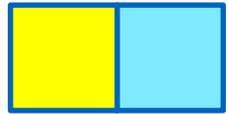
NB. This statutory duty therefore is to “*have regard*” to the purpose of the AONB. It may be noted, simply for comparison, that having “*regard*” is a lesser duty than the duty to have “*special regard*” in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, “*to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*” in the context of Listed Building Consent decisions;

- a power on the Secretary of State to establish a Conservation Board (and make further provision in relation to its constitution etc) for each AONB (SS86 & 88);
- a duty on any Conservation Board in exercise of their function to have regard to the purpose of “*(a) conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty, and (b) the purpose of increasing the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the area of outstanding natural beauty*” (S87 - note this second purpose of Boards is

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<sup>2</sup> The Applicant’s parent company, Scottish Power Renewables, already has considerable experience and technical expertise in work in the vicinity of the AONB and of successfully minimising the extent of, and avoiding and minimising effects on, the AONB in the construction of the East Anglia ONE offshore wind farm and associated onshore infrastructure.

<sup>3</sup> The equivalent duty in relation to National Parks includes having regard to the additional purpose “(b) of promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public”, this does not feature in the purpose of AONBs to which public bodies should have regard. (See S5 and S11A, inserted by the Environment Act 1995, of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949).



not one to which public bodies/relevant authorities such as the Secretary of State must have regard (as set out above);

- a duty on Conservation Boards that “*while having regard to the purposes mentioned in subsection (1)*” they “*shall seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the area of outstanding natural beauty, but without incurring significant expenditure in doing so...*”;
- a duty on local planning authorities to prepare and publish an AONB Management Plan within three years of designation, unless within that time an AONB Conservation Board is established, which then has the same duty within two years of its establishment, and a duty to review that plan every 5 years;
- a duty on conservation boards to consult NE and local planning authorities on any proposed Management Plan (S90), and
- a power on the Secretary of State, in consultation with NE, to provide grants to Conservation Boards (S91).

### **5.1.2 Duty to Have Regard to the Statutory Purpose of the AONB**

33. The statutory purpose of the AONB, to which the ExA and ultimately the Secretary of State is required to have regard, is “*conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty*” (S85). As stated above, it is clear from the attention being paid to this matter in the application and pre-examination procedural decisions and from the representations made, that regard is indeed being had and is likely to continue to be had through the process of the examination, to the statutory purpose of the AONB.

34. Further, the assessment carried out within the application and set out in this document, when taken into account by the ExA and the Secretary of State, provides a further means by which regard is had to the statutory purpose of the AONB.

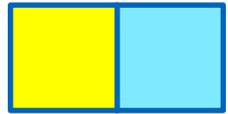
## **5.2 Accordance with Relevant National Policy Statements (NPSs)**

### **5.2.1 Relevant NPSs**

35. The Planning Act 2008 requires that the decision on each of the two projects must be taken in accordance with any relevant National Policy Statements (NPS), unless a limited number of specified exceptions apply. Relevant NPSs are the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1), the NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (NPS EN-3) and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (NPS EN-5).

#### **5.2.1.1 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1)**

36. This NPS sets out national policy for energy infrastructure. When combined with the relevant technology-specific energy NPS (NPS EN-3), this document



provides the national policy against which proposals will be assessed by the ExA and determined by the Secretary of State.

37. Policy in NPS EN-1 on the consideration of alternatives in the preparation of NSIP applications states, in paragraph 4.4.3, that “alternative proposals which mean the necessary development could not proceed, for example because the alternative proposals are not commercially viable or alternative proposals for sites would not be physically suitable, can be excluded on the grounds that they are not important and relevant to the IPC’s decision”.

38. NPS EN-1 also requires (in paragraph 4.1.9) that the financial viability and technical feasibility of NSIPs has been properly assessed:

*“Where the [Secretary of State] considers, on information provided in an application, that the financial viability and technical feasibility of the proposal has been properly assessed by the applicant it is unlikely to be of relevance in [Secretary of State] decision making”.*

39. NPS EN-1 includes elements of relevance to a consideration of landscape and visual matters at any site, along with specific sections which concern nationally designated landscapes, such as AONBs. These are discussed separately below:

40. NPS EN-1 clearly states at paragraph 5.9.9 within a section titled **‘Development proposed within nationally designated landscapes’**, that:

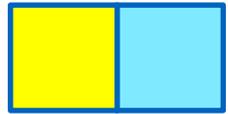
*‘National Parks, the Broads and AONBs have been confirmed by the Government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes which help ensure their continued protection and which the IPC [now the Secretary of State] should have regard to in its decisions’.*

41. Paragraph 5.9.9 goes on to state that:

*‘The conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should be given substantial weight by the [Secretary of State] in deciding on applications for development consent in these areas’.*

42. Paragraph 5.9.12 of NPS EN-1 address developments outside designated areas which might affect them. The policy states that

*‘The duty to have regard to the purposes of nationally designated areas also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. The aim should be to avoid compromising the purposes of designation and such projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational and other relevant constraints. This should include projects in England which may have impacts on National Scenic Areas in Scotland’.*



43. The NPS further states in paragraph 5.9.13 that:

*'The fact that a proposed project will be visible from within a designated area should not in itself be a reason for refusing consent.'*

44. In a section titled '*Developments in other areas*' NPS EN-1 sets out at paragraph 5.9.14 that

*'Outside nationally designated areas, there are local landscapes that may be highly valued locally and protected by local designation. Where a local development document in England or a local development plan in Wales has policies based on landscape character assessment, these should be paid particular attention. However, local landscape designations should not be used in themselves to refuse consent, as this may unduly restrict acceptable development.'*

45. It goes on to recognise at paragraph 5.9.15 that:

*'The scale of such projects means that they will often be visible within many miles of the site of the proposed infrastructure'*

46. However, confirms that notwithstanding this:

*'The [Secretary of State] should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits (including need) of the project'.*

47. Paragraph 5.9.17 then sets out that:

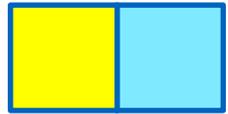
*'The [Secretary of State] should consider whether the project has been designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to minimise harm to the landscape, including by reasonable mitigation'.*

48. In a subsequent section addressing '*Visual Impact*' NPS, EN-1 goes on to reiterate the likelihood of such infrastructure having notable visual effects, stating at paragraph 5.9.18 that

*'All proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites. The [Secretary of State] will have to judge whether the visual effects on sensitive receptors, such as local residents, and other receptors, such as visitors to the local area, outweigh the benefits of the project'.*

49. A further section concerns '*Mitigation*' and states at paragraph 5.9.22

*'Within a defined site, adverse landscape and visual effects may be minimised through appropriate siting of infrastructure within that site,*



*design including colours and materials, and landscaping schemes, depending on the size and type of the proposed project. Materials and designs of buildings should always be given careful consideration’.*

50. This confirms that the need to minimise landscape and visual harm, referred to in paragraph 5.9.17, can be met through appropriate siting, design and mitigation planting solutions.

51. It is of note that paragraph 5.9.19 of NPS EN-1 states that:

*‘It may be helpful for applicants to draw attention, in the supporting evidence to their applications, to any examples of existing permitted infrastructure they are aware of with a similar magnitude of impact on sensitive receptors. This may assist the IPC [now the Secretary of State] in judging the weight it should give to the assessed visual impacts of the proposed development’*

52. This matter is addressed subsequently in this Note (**Appendix 2**).

53. In addition, NPS EN-1 makes clear that account should be taken of the fact that projects can be temporary and their impacts reversible. It states in paragraph 5.9.16 that:

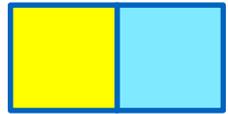
*“In reaching a judgment, the [Secretary of State] should consider whether any adverse impact is temporary, such as during construction, and/or whether any adverse impact on the landscape will be capable of being reversed in a timescale that the [Secretary of State] considers reasonable”.*

#### 5.2.1.2 NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (NPS EN-3)

54. NPS EN-3 refers to AONBs only in the context of policy on Biomass and Waste Combustion (section 2.5). In an equivalent to the policy of NPS EN-1 that ‘The fact that a proposed project will be visible from within a designated area should not in itself be a reason for refusing consent’, NPS EN-3 states, in paragraph 2.6.208 that

*“Where a proposed offshore wind farm is within sight of the coast, there may be adverse effects. The [Secretary of State] should not refuse to grant consent for a development solely on the ground of an adverse effect on the seascape or visual amenity unless:*

- *it considers that an alternative layout within the identified site could be reasonably proposed which would minimise any harm, taking into account other constraints that the applicant has faced such as ecological effects, while maintaining safety or economic viability of the application; or*



- *taking account of the sensitivity of the receptor(s) as set out in EN-1 paragraph 5.9.18, the harmful effects are considered to outweigh the benefits of the proposed scheme”.*

55. This confirms, as is the case for landscape impacts considered in EN-1, that seascape and visual impacts need to be considered in the planning balance as part of an overall assessment of landscape impacts and of other environmental impacts and the benefits of the Projects as a whole.

#### 5.2.1.3 NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (NPS EN-5)

56. NPS EN-5 in 2.8.9 states that AONBs should be considered in decisions related to undergrounding of high voltage cables. The Projects onshore cables are proposed to be underground (landfall equipment within the AONB is not the focus of NE’s representations on AONBs). In addition, NPS EN-5 refers to AONBs in paragraph 1.7.3 in providing background on the Outline Appraisal of Sustainability carried out in support of the designations of the NPSs.

#### 5.2.2 Other Policy, Plans and Guidance

57. Other policy, plans and guidance, including the AONB Management Plan are of relevance because they inform the examination and decision in accordance with NPS policies on the AONB.

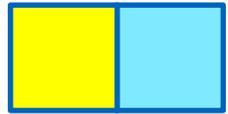
##### 5.2.2.1 The AONB Management Plan

58. As noted above there is a duty under the CROW Act to produce a Management Plan for the AONB. The applicable AONB Management Plan is the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area AONB Management Plan (2018-23)<sup>4</sup> (‘the Management Plan’) and the policies it contains are an important and relevant matter in reaching a decision on whether the application meets the tests within. The Management Plan specifically addresses the matter of new offshore energy development and its potential to impact the AONB on page 46 stating:

*‘The Suffolk Coast is being promoted by the local authorities as an Energy Coast, with proposals for a new nuclear build at Sizewell, offshore wind farms and electricity interconnectors linking the UK with mainland Europe. These developments will bring national benefits but need to be mindful of the nationally designated landscapes, and the concerns of local residents and existing businesses, many of which rely on the outstanding landscapes in which they operate. Such major developments will impact upon the AONB and development proposals should be explicit in setting out the impacts of the developments. Once national or local decisions on major development have been made, the AONB Partnership will work constructively with developers to reduce and mitigate adverse impacts, on a range of natural beauty indicators. Major developments that do go ahead*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2018-23-SCH-Management-Plan.pdf>



*within or adjacent to the AONB (i.e. that pass the tests set out in National Policy Statements and National Planning Policy Framework) and that cause a significant impact on landscape and scenic beauty must include an assessment of the detrimental effect on the environment, landscape and/or seascape, biodiversity and recreational opportunities.*

*Mitigation plans should also be put forward to avoid or, if that is not possible, to minimise adverse impacts and residual effects within the AONB. This should be achieved through appropriate landscape and amenity enhancements that are aligned to this Management Plan. Where the unavoidable adverse impacts are significant this may well require an ambitious off-site mitigation package, in addition to any on-site works. Full landscape and visual impact assessment will be a fundamental requirement of such major developments’.*

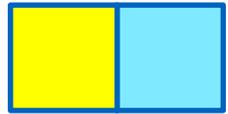
59. The Management Plan therefore acknowledges that the benefits of offshore wind farms will necessitate impacts. The Project passes the tests for such development set out in the NPSs, as required by the Management Plan, and has effected measures to reduce the impacts on the AONB and has explicitly set out those residual effects that would remain in the ES.

#### 5.2.2.2 The ‘Natural Beauty’ of the AONB:

60. The Management Plan states the following on page 18 regarding its ‘Natural Beauty’:
61. ‘The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB Partnership, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and EDF Energy worked together in 2016 with the purpose of establishing what constitutes the natural beauty (and special qualities, see 2.2) of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB. The report into what constitutes the natural beauty and special qualities of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB can be found on its website’.
62. The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Natural Beauty and Special Qualities Indicators report (November 2016)<sup>5</sup>, (the Special Qualities Report), was produced by LDA Design following discussions between the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Partnership, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and EDF Energy. Its purpose was to establish what constitutes the natural beauty and special qualities of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.
63. The findings are contained in tables within the Special Qualities Report in Section 2.0 (Natural Beauty Indicators) and 3.0 (Special Qualities Indicators). In terms of Natural Beauty this identifies the following indicators:
- Landscape Quality

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/V1.8Natural-Beauty-and-Special-Qualities-of-the-Suffolk-Coast-and-Heath....pdf>



- Scenic Quality
- Relative Wildness
- Relative Tranquillity
- Natural Heritage Features
- Cultural Heritage

#### 5.2.2.3 The 'Special Qualities' of the AONB:

64. The landscape of the AONB is described and characterised within the Management Plan, which states the following on page 19 regarding its 'special qualities':

*'The special qualities of an AONB landscape are often those attributes of an area that may contribute to an appreciation of natural beauty. These are listed in the Natural Beauty and Special Qualities document on the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB website.'*

65. The findings are contained in tables within the Special Qualities Report in Section 2.0 (Natural Beauty Indicators) and 3.0 (Special Qualities Indicators). In terms of Special Qualities this identifies the following indicators:

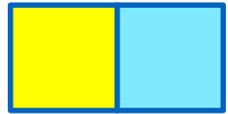
- Health and Well-being
- Community
- Economy
- Ecosystem Goods and Services

#### 5.2.2.4 Relevant Development Plan Policies, Supplementary Planning Guidance or Documents

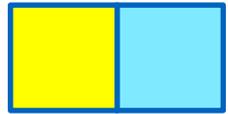
66. As part of the Planning Act 2008 process, relevant local authorities are invited to submit a Local Impact Report (LIR) giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the authority's area to which the Secretary of State in his decision and the ExA in its recommendation, are required to have regard.

67. The sole definition of an LIR is given in s60(3) of the Act as '*a report in writing giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the authority's area (or any part of that area)*'. The content of the LIR is a matter for the local authority concerned, as long as it falls within this statutory definition. However, 'Advice note one: Local Impact Reports' prepared by the Planning Inspectorate gives an indication of the topics which are likely to be considered and these include:

- '*Relevant development plan policies, supplementary planning guidance or documents*';



- *‘Local area characteristics such as urban and landscape qualities’;*
  - *‘Designated sites’; and*
  - *‘Relevant development proposals under consideration or granted permission but not commenced or completed’.*
68. East Suffolk, and Suffolk County Councils submitted a joint LIR dated November 2020 [REP1-132] which sets out Local Plan policies relating to the AONB and its protection, and states that “visual, landscape and seascape impacts” are of principal importance, as “key local issues”, to the Councils.
69. It follows from this and from the policies in relevant NPSs advising on their relevance, that it is therefore necessary to consider the relevant planning policy context relating to the AONB set out in the applicable Local Plan documents covering the relevant Local Authority area.
70. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, East Suffolk Council was created by parliamentary order, covering the former districts of Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council. Nonetheless, the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan continues to remain the local plan applicable to the area covering the former Suffolk Coastal district until such time as replacement documents are prepared. This comprises a number of local planning documents.
71. A number of policies from the ‘Suffolk Coastal Local Plan’ (incorporating the First and Second Alterations) remain as part of the Development Plan for Suffolk Coastal District, and in addition the ‘Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan Document’ was adopted by the Council on 26th January 2017. However, it is those which form part of the ‘Core Strategy and Development Management Policies’ document which are relevant to a consideration of landscape and visual matters concerning the AONB. This is discussed further below.
72. Rather than one overarching AONB Policy, there are a number of Policies in the Core Strategy concerning development in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB (SP8 - *Tourism*, SP14 - *Biodiversity & Geodiversity*, SP15 - *Landscape & Townscape*, DM17 - *Touring Caravan, Camper Vans and Camping Sites*, DM18 - *Static Holiday Caravans, Cabins and Chalets*, DM21 - *Design: Aesthetics*, DM29 - *Telecommunications*).
73. Of most relevance to the proposed development sites are SP15 - *Landscape & Townscape* and DM21 - *Design: Aesthetics*, which address development both within and outside the AONB.
74. SP15 sets out that it is the policy of the Council



*‘to protect and enhance the various landscape character areas within the district either through opportunities linked to development or through other strategies’.* It also refers to *‘the protected landscape of the AONB’* amongst a list of areas which are *‘considered to be particularly significant’.*

75. DM21 sets out that proposals that ‘seriously detract from the character of their surroundings will not be permitted’.
76. The new Suffolk Coastal Local Plan was submitted to the Government for Examination in March 2019. The emerging Plan includes Policy SCLP3.4 which specifically addresses the matter of the impact of major infrastructure projects on the AONB, including as follows:

Policy SCLP3.4: Proposals for Major Energy Infrastructure Projects  
*‘Proposals for Major Infrastructure Projects across the District and the need to mitigate the impacts arising from these will be considered against the following policy requirements: (inter alia)*  
*f) Requirement for robust assessment of the potential impacts on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty’;*

77. Table 6.23 of the **Development Consent and Planning Statement** (APP-579) details the accordancy with both NPS and local policies.

### 5.2.3 Accordancy with NPSs

#### 5.2.3.1 Design Iteration Undertaken to Reduce Effects on the AONB:

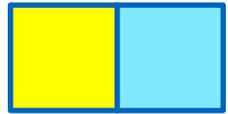
78. A detailed explanation of the design iteration process undertaken for both projects was set out in **Chapter 4 - Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives** (APP-052) of the Environmental Statement for each project. This design iteration process carefully considered the potential for effects on the AONB (particularly since the applicant, once it has become a statutory undertaker, will be subject to the same statutory duty as other authorities to “have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty” of the AONB as set out S85 CRoW<sup>6</sup>), including for both the onshore and offshore elements of the projects.

##### 5.2.3.1.1 Onshore elements

79. During the process of determining the location for the onshore substations for both of the Projects a number of locations were considered, including four sites that were located in the AONB, one of which was at Broom Covert, Sizewell and was subject to consultation by the Applicants during its Phase 3.5 pre-application consultation.

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<sup>6</sup> The Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) companies East Anglia ONE and East Anglia THREE are already statutory undertakers and thus the SPR team has previously demonstrated its expertise in developing wind farms whilst having regard to this duty and successfully avoiding and minimising effects on the AONB.



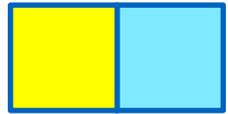
80. It was established that siting the onshore substations in the Broom Covert, Sizewell site was likely to result in significant effects on some of the special qualities of the AONB. A suitable alternative location outside the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB was however also identified (at Grove Wood, Friston).
81. NPS EN-1 sets out the criteria to be applied to determine whether ‘exceptional circumstances’ can be demonstrated to justify major development within the AONB. As was set out in the ‘**Development Consent and Planning Statement**’ (APP- 579) for each of the Projects, it is the Applicants’ view that as a feasible alternative site for the substations has been identified outside of the AONB, at Grove Wood, Friston, the exceptional circumstances for locating the onshore substations within the AONB do not apply. The substations located at Grove Wood, Friston would bring about no significant landscape or visual effects on the AONB or its special qualities. There has therefore been a substantive reduction in the potential effect on the AONB as a result of the Applicants’ site selection and design iteration process.

#### 5.2.3.1.2 Offshore elements

82. No significant effects on the AONB were identified in relation to the offshore elements of the East Anglia ONE North project, so no further design iteration was undertaken in relation to the turbines and the AONB, an assessment with which NE agrees in its Relevant Representation:

*“Natural England agrees with the assessment of no significance effect for landscape and visual receptors within the AONB or its seascape setting. We also agree with the judgement that of no significant effects on the special qualities of the AONB and users of the Suffolk Coastal Path” (RR-059).*

83. Further, it was agreed at the July workshop that EA1N is considered not to contribute meaningfully / significantly to the cumulative effect with EA2 i.e. not significant (Deadline 1 Appendix E1b NE Response (Point 3.12.6)).
84. For the East Anglia TWO project, an additional refinement to the offshore elements of the project was undertaken in response to the feedback received from consultees on the potential seascape, landscape and visual effects, including effects to the AONB, that were identified in the Preliminary Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). As noted in ‘**Chapter 4 - Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives**’ of the ES (APP-052), with regard to seascape effects, responses particularly focussed on the spread of wind turbines on the horizon as seen from the coast and the potential for cumulative effects with other projects. East Anglia TWO Limited therefore sought to determine if it was possible to reduce the area of the East Anglia TWO windfarm site, and its lateral spread, whilst maintaining commercial viability on the basis of the original generation

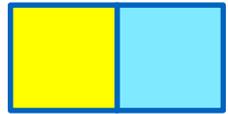


capacity and wind turbine generator envelope. The north-south extent of the East Anglia TWO windfarm site was subsequently reduced (by 9.68km on the western boundary and 8.03km on the east) in order to mitigate potential seascape effects, without a reduction in wind turbine numbers or generation capacity. The windfarm boundary was reduced by a total area of 37km<sup>2</sup>. This refinement is shown in **Figure 4.3: Refinement of the East Anglia TWO Windfarm Site Boundary** of the ES (APP-082)

85. As a consequence, the magnitude of change on seascape, landscape and visual receptors and on the setting and key coastal viewpoints within the AONB was reduced. **Chapter 28 'Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity'** of the ES (APP-076), confirms that, while a reduction in the defined magnitude of impact (i.e. low / medium / high) has not occurred from all viewpoints, this refinement has resulted in a reduction in the landscape and visual effect of the offshore elements of the East Anglia TWO project, including a reduction in effects on the AONB.
86. In addition, following submission of the application the Project has further reduced the effects of the Project by **reducing maximum turbine height from 300m, to 282m** given developing understanding of the technical feasibility of various turbine designs appropriate to the site, thus reducing the height and appearance of the windfarm when viewed from the AONB. The commitment to the reduction in turbine height was confirmed in the **Notice of Intent to Make Non-material or Material Changes** (REP1-039) submitted at Deadline 1.
87. It is therefore clear that for both the onshore and offshore elements of the Projects, design iteration has taken place which has reduced the effect on the AONB in accordance with NPS EN-1 policy that such infrastructure should be designed "sensitively given the various siting, operational and other relevant constraints" (para 5.9.12) and "carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to minimise harm to the landscape carefully (para 5.8.17), whilst maintaining the generation capacity and commercial viability of the projects, in accordance with NPS policy on the urgent need for generation from renewable energy and requiring the proper assessment of viability.

#### 5.2.3.2 Examples of Existing Permitted Infrastructure outside an AONB with effects upon its coastal views.

88. As noted above, NPS EN-1 states that it may be helpful for applicants to draw attention to any examples of existing permitted infrastructure they are aware of with a similar magnitude of impact on sensitive receptors.
89. In this regard, this section of the Note sets out a number of examples which are considered to be of relevance. In addition, **Appendix 2** provides further details of



existing operational offshore wind farms around the coastline of England and Wales and their distance from AONBs and National Parks. This demonstrates that there are more than 20 existing operational offshore wind farms which lie closer to an AONB or National Park than would be the case for East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO (which lie at a distance of 37.7km and 32.6km from the AONB respectively). Whilst it is acknowledged that the Projects' proposed turbines are much taller (at a maximum height of 282m) than the currently operational schemes. However, in many cases the schemes are at least 10km closer to the to an AONB or National Park than would be the case for East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO, meaning there is much less of the wider seascape in the foreground of views towards those schemes.

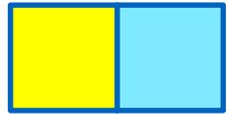
#### 5.2.3.2.1 - Galloper Offshore Wind Farm Order 2013

90. It is noted that the Galloper Offshore Wind Farm included onshore elements which were located within the same Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB as that which is being considered in relation to the Projects. In their Report to the Secretary of State, dated 27 February 2013, the ExA stated the following at paragraph 9.107 regarding the impact of the proposed substation within the AONB:

*'The location in a designated landscape means we have given substantial weight to the evidence presented concerning the natural beauty of the landscape in the area. We consider the landscape proposals, included to mitigate the negative effects of landscape and visual impact as now proposed by the applicant will reduce adverse effects to an acceptable level. We do not consider there to be landscape or visual issues that would argue against the Order being confirmed'.*

91. This therefore provides a clear example of where consent has been granted notwithstanding acknowledged direct adverse effects on the AONB, from onshore infrastructure located within the AONB, on the basis that any such effects had been mitigated to an acceptable degree. It is understood that this same conclusion could be reached in relation to the manner in which the East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO Projects have also reduced the potential effect on the AONB, including the location of the substation outside of the AONB, going above and beyond the mitigation which was undertaken for the Galloper Wind Farm, where the substation was sited within the AONB and yet was deemed acceptable.

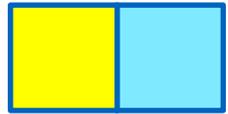
92. The offshore elements of the Galloper Offshore Wind Farm are located 27km from the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB at their nearest point. The Panel of Inspectors did not disagree with the applicant's assessment that the turbines would have no more than a *'minor to negligible adverse effect for onshore landscape and visual receptors'* with no significant effects on the AONB. It is



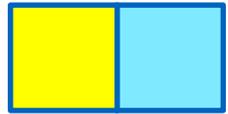
noted that this scheme is 5.6km closer to the AONB than the East Anglia TWO project would be and is comprised of turbines which were consented at 195m to blade tip, which are not insubstantial in size, albeit smaller but also closer to shore than those proposed as part of the East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO projects (the Galloper turbines have been constructed at 185.5m above LAT).

#### 5.2.3.2.2 Rampion Offshore Wind Farm 2014

93. Rampion Offshore Wind Farm consists of 116 x 140m blade tip turbines which (rather than relating to an AONB), are located approximately 14.4km from the South Downs National Park (at its closest point), contrasting with East Anglia TWO which would involve turbines with a maximum height of 282m, at 32.6km distance from an AONB. Due to the heights of turbines and the differences in their distance offshore, the perceived scale of the turbines in views from the shore is highly comparable. It is noted that for both AONBs and National Parks there is a statutory duty to have regard to their purposes and that appropriate weight should therefore be given to conserving and enhancing their landscape and scenic beauty. However, in addition, National Parks have further, more extensive statutory purposes than AONBs concerning wider issues, such as recreation provision. Nonetheless, the Rampion project is considered applicable as a relevant example, notwithstanding these differences, given that both deal at least in part with nationally designated landscapes, and give these great weight and have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.
94. In its recommendation report, the ExA was clear that Seascape, Landscape and Visual effects were a principal issue in the Examination, in particular due to the location of the array off the Sussex coast and therefore its exposure to and visibility from settlements along the coast; the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and the Sussex Heritage Coast.
95. The panel found that the offshore windfarm would give rise to **significant effects** on the SDNP and Heritage Coast, and that **no measures were available to completely mitigate these significant effects**. Indeed, the ExA recognised that there would be some change to the special qualities of the SDNP, in particular at paragraph 4.382 of the recommendation report that the *‘diverse, inspirational landscapes and breathtaking views’* **would be changed in parts of the SDNP**. The ExA considered that sufficient mitigation had nonetheless been provided, and that the offshore windfarm was, **at around 14km away, ‘remote’** (paragraph 4.383) from the SDNP/Heritage Coast.
96. Ultimately, it was determined at paragraph 4.385 that the **level of benefit of energy generation** outweighed the potential damage to the setting of the nationally designated SDNP (and Heritage Coast) and its long-distance views.



97. This therefore provides a clear example of where consent has been granted to an offshore wind farm, notwithstanding effects on the special qualities of a National Park, which has a higher level of protection than AONBs, but which also requires appropriate weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty, on the basis that any such effect had been mitigated to an acceptable degree. **Furthermore, this scheme was located only 14.4km from the SDNP when compared to East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO (at a distance of 37.7km and 32.6km from the AONB respectively).**



## 6 Conclusions and the manner in which effects on the AONB should be considered

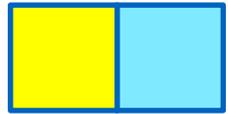
98. With regard to the context set out above, the following section sets out the manner in which it is understood that the effects identified in relation to the AONB should be considered as part of the determination process. It begins by confirming the extent to which the proposals have sought to minimise effects on the AONB and continues through to a consideration of whether the identified significant effects would lead to any harm to the special qualities of the AONB or constitute compromising the purposes of designation.

### 6.1 Minimisation of the effects as per policy requirements

99. Policy relating to the AONB, and in particular conserving its natural beauty as set out in the above note, seeks to minimise the effects. Minimising the effects does not mean to make them minimal, as this would ultimately lead to no development at all, which is not the purpose of policy and is not required. This is made clear within NPS EN-1. The NPS, at its paragraph 5.9.21, sets out how effects can be minimised through a reduction in the scale of a development, but is mindful of the consequences that this may have in terms of operational constraints and reduction in function, specifically referencing energy production in this regard. Where mitigation through a reduction in scale is envisaged by NPS-1, it is countenanced only on the basis of a marginal loss of function. The primary manner in which effects are to be minimised, is through appropriate siting and design. NPS EN-1, at its paragraph 5.9.17 states as follows:

*'The [Secretary of State] should consider whether the project has been designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other constraints, to minimise harm to the landscape, including by reasonable mitigation'*

100. It is clear therefore that an appropriate balance has to be struck between the function and operation of a development, including its siting and other relevant constraints and the reduction or minimising of landscape and visual effects through mitigation and that this should not be at the expense of any more than a marginal loss of function.
101. AONB policy seeks to protect the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. It is of note that throughout all the tiers of policy relating to the protection of AONBs, that the term 'preserve' is not used. This is a term specifically used in relation to the protection of certain aspects of our cultural heritage, but purposely

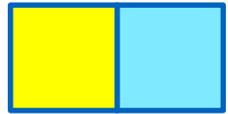


absent from AONB policy. Conservation allows for appropriate change in a way which preservation would not and AONBs are living working landscapes that need to balance the natural beauty for which they were designated with the needs of society and communities. For example, Conservation Boards are required to seek opportunities to foster economic and social well-being within AONBs and to meet the demands of recreation without compromising the original reasons for designation. Conservation is about managing change and striking an appropriate balance between the evolving needs of society and the natural beauty of the landscape. As set out in this note, **EN-1 does envisage that there will be development in and visible from AONBs and thus there is an acceptance in policy that change and its effects will occur.** In the context of energy development, it is likely that the effects arising will be adverse and that some of the effects will be significant. Once effects have been appropriately minimised through siting and design (commensurate with maintaining the function of the proposals and allowing for operational constraints) it is a matter for the planning balance. The conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape should be given substantial weight in deciding on acceptability, but nevertheless, consent may be and often is granted for development in AONBs where the development is in the public interest and the purposes of the designation are not comprised.

102. In the case of these proposals, the element of the development giving rise to the significant effects is not within the AONB but is a considerable distance outside it. The impacts have been appropriately mitigated through siting and design (as set out in detail in the application submissions) and the residual effects, albeit that there are some residual significant effects on the seascape aspects of the Special Qualities from a limited number of locations within the AONB, do not compromise the reasons for designating the AONB and do not harm or undermine its integrity. It is clear that the Natural Beauty will be conserved and the harms arising can be **brought into the planning balance in the knowledge that they have been appropriately mitigated and minimised** as required by policy.

## 6.2 Consideration of the Residual Significant Landscape and Visual Effects

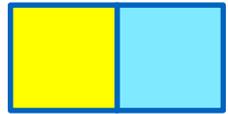
103. Having firstly undertaken an appropriate process of minimising the effects of the proposals and then appropriately mitigating those residual impacts where this can reasonably be achieved, it has been assessed that there will be some significant residual landscape and visual effects upon the AONB and that these effects cannot be further mitigated. However, it should be noted that these effects were all concluded to be of only medium magnitude.



104. The residual effects of the proposals on the AONB and specifically its special qualities largely relate to views of turbines out to sea and beyond the seascape horizon seen from a number of locations, but not continuously, along a stretch of the AONB's coastal fringe between Southwold and the north side of Orford Ness. **The views of the offshore turbines will be seen only in good weather conditions with good visibility and therefore on only limited occasions throughout the year and, when visible, they would be seen in the context of a vast seascape where the turbines will be located beyond the visible horizon** and at distances from the AONB of at least 37.7km for East Anglia ONE North and at least 32.6km for East Anglia TWO.
105. These residual effects on the AONB therefore, when judged alongside the more general effects, cannot and do not overwhelm the assessment of the overall impact on the AONB which is minimal. In addition, it is then also relevant to consider the manner in which the significant landscape and visual effects identified for the AONB might lead to significant effects on the special qualities of the AONB.

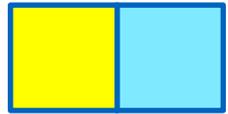
### 6.3 Consideration of the Effects in relation to the Special Qualities

106. Having established the residual significant landscape and visual effects, it is necessary to then address the potential effect that these residual significant effects may have upon the Natural Beauty of the AONB and to do so in relation to Special Qualities which give rise to that natural beauty. As set out in detail earlier in this note, the Statutory Purpose of the AONB is to protect landscape to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.
107. What constitutes the Natural Beauty and Special Qualities of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB has been established and set out within a Natural Beauty and Special Qualities Indicators document prepared for this AONB (LDA, 2016). It forms a part of the baseline to help inform the design of proposed development and against which to judge the effects of a proposed development on the protected landscape and its special qualities. It is also intended to be of benefit in articulating what is special about the landscape, including its relationship to adjacent offshore areas. These indicators have been used to inform the assessment of the Projects and to inform decisions concerning the minimising of effects and their mitigation. As stated above, the Projects have gone through a comprehensive design iteration process through which the effects on the AONB have been minimised. The substations have been located outside the AONB and are the subject of a comprehensive mitigation strategy and the onshore cable route has rigorously assessed the potential landfall sites and routing options in order to minimise effects and allow for appropriate mitigation and compensation. The design of the offshore elements has also sought, through good design and a design iteration process, to minimise the effects upon the Special Qualities of the



AONB and through that its Natural Beauty, insofar as this can be achieved in relation to siting and functional constraints. This accords with the requirements of NPS EN-1 policy.

108. The Natural Beauty and Special Qualities which relate to the identified residual significant effects are those where the indicator relates to, or is supported by, an aspect concerning the visual contribution made by seascape to the AONB and the AONB's relationship with this seascape. The Natural Beauty and Special Qualities Indicators document deals firstly with Natural Beauty indicators and then Special Quality indicators. For the purposes of the assessments set out in the ES and this note, the Special Quality indicators are taken to be both the relevant indicators, including the Natural Beauty indicators. The interrelationship between the landscape and the sea is stated in the Indicators Report to contribute to 'Landscape Quality' as it also does to 'Scenic Quality'. It is worthy of note in this regard however, that the potentially incongruous elements identified along the coast, both onshore and offshore are said to divide opinion between those who do see them as incongruous and those who see them as enigmatic. These include the power stations at Sizewell and the turbines at Greater Gabbard. The extent to which these elements are visually harmful or part of the established and evolving character of this coast, is therefore a matter of perception and judgement and where responses will vary.
109. In relation to the 'Scenic Quality' indicator and its sub-element 'Striking Landform', this is informed by long distance and panoramic views out to sea and along the heritage coast, and these views also form an element of the visual interest in the patterns of land cover. Views out to sea are also an element of the Sensory Factors discussed in the document, where large open vistas across heaths and along the coast out to sea form part of the memorable views alongside the 'Big Suffolk Skies'. With the distance that the turbines lie off the Suffolk coast, the assessment in the ES establishes that **there will remain a vast and open seascape with wide panoramic views**, notwithstanding the visibility of the proposed turbines. **The turbines would not interrupt or block views due to their location more than 30km offshore and because they will only be seen on and indeed beyond the very distant skyline and not in front of or interrupting that skyline and the sweep of seascape** leading up to it. The largely undeveloped coastline and offshore areas is also cited, although again **the established presence of energy development is acknowledged as forming a part of the established character**. The general lack of development across the AONB is also stated to contribute to relative tranquillity. The turbines at Greater Gabbard are not cited as detractors from tranquillity although a range of other issues are specifically referenced. In this regard, the Natural Beauty and Special Qualities Indicators document, when addressing historic influences on the landscape, state amongst the example indicators as follows:

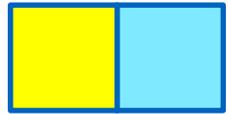


*‘More latterly the Sizewell nuclear complex highlights evidence of time depth across the landscape. Both the nuclear complex and the nearby infrastructure associated with offshore energy generation are part of a developing story of Suffolk’s Energy Coast’.*

110. Again, this demonstrates that the AONB is in part characterised by its established and evolving energy development and that this is not wholly harmful but both part of the story and future of the Suffolk Coast and this AONB.
111. The assessment within the ES has addressed the effect of the proposals on these indicators and matters raised in this regard by Natural England have been fully addressed in the **Applicants’ Comments on Relevant Representations (AS-036 and ExA.AS-10.D2.V1** submitted at Deadline 2). The assessment and subsequent responses set out how the indicators have been taken into consideration in the assessment and how the assessment has been appropriately informed by them. The nature of the effects is reported alongside the magnitude of change and a determination is made as to their significance taking the contribution they make to the Natural Beauty into consideration. The assessment also puts these effects into an appropriate context in terms of location and duration of effects, whether or not they are temporary or reversible and their geographical extent. Their **effect upon the Natural Beauty of the AONB is addressed, assessed and reported and it is concluded that although for East Anglia TWO there may be some residual significant effects on the identified special qualities, that the purposes of the designation are not compromised** nor is the integrity of the AONB and its fundamental character. This Suffolk coastal landscape is and will remain an area of outstanding natural beauty and can accommodate the change that will be brought about by this development. The benefits of the development will outweigh the identified harms when considered in the wider balance and this is evidenced within the Applicants’ planning statements.

#### 6.4 Consideration of how ‘Significant’ is different to ‘Unacceptable’

112. In considering the significant effects that have been identified in the EIA in relation to the Projects, it is necessary to consider the factor of “significance” appropriately and in context. The purpose of an EIA is to identify the significant effects. It is **not the role of EIA to identify the unacceptable effects** as it is an objective assessment, whose purpose is to inform a decision-making process. It is for a decision maker to decide what weight to give to the significant effects, dependant on the nature and consequences of an effect or series of effects and the policy context within which it is being judged. The weight attached to such effects is then weighed in the balance taking all the relevant factors into account. In this process it is clear that **a significant effect may not be an unacceptable effect,**



**including any such effects identified in relation to the special qualities of an AONB.**

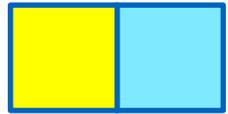
113. A development which gives rise to residual significant effects, having properly sought to minimise and mitigate its effects, may be judged to be acceptable, as the context; location; limitations on the frequency and clarity of visibility throughout the year; nature; frequency and geographical extent along the length of coast affected;; magnitude of effect; and ultimately the consequences of an identified effect, all require to be taken into consideration as part of determining the weight that is attached to them.

## **6.5 Consideration of whether the proposals would compromise the Purposes of Designation of the AONB**

114. Having considered the extent to which the effects have been minimised, determined the extent of the residual significant effects that would remain, and understood to what extent these residual significant effects would affect the special qualities of the AONB, whilst noting that significant effects are not automatically unacceptable, it is therefore then relevant to undertake the final element of the process, a consideration of whether the proposals would compromise the purposes of designation.
115. In considering the question of whether proposals compromise the purpose of the designation it is important to draw a distinction between the identification any significant effects upon the AONB and its Special Qualities and a second level of consideration relating to whether such effects compromise the purpose of designation. It would be wrong to automatically judge the significant effects from an EIA perspective as compromising the designation and a further level of judgement must be made. If the test enshrined in the EN-1 Policy had intended that there should be no significant effects on the Special Qualities, it would have clearly and simply stated this and set a threshold on this basis. It does not. It is useful in considering and understanding this matter, to consider the approach taken in Scottish Planning Policy in relation the National Scenic Areas (Scotland's direct equivalent of AONBs). Paragraph 5.9.13 of EN-1 as follows applies to the consideration of projects in England which may have impacts on National Scenic Areas in Scotland:

*'The fact that a proposed project will be visible from within a designated area should not in itself be a reason for refusing consent'.*

116. Scottish planning policy (SPP), concerning the potential impact on their National Scenic Areas, is a useful reference in seeking to understand the test as set out in EN-1, as it seeks the same protection of scenic beauty.



117. In dealing with National Designations, SPP sets out the required tests at paragraph 212 where it states as follows;

National Designations

*212. Development that affects a National Park, National Scenic Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest or a National Nature Reserve should only be permitted where:*

- *the objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; or*
- *any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance.*

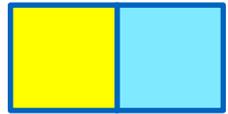
118. The intention of policy for both AONB's and National Scenic Areas is to protect the objectives of the designation (i.e. scenic beauty) by ensuring that the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised. If the overall integrity of the designation is not compromised, then, as is clearly articulated in paragraph 212 of SPP, any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated, are considered in the planning balance.

119. With regard to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, it has been assessed that there are some significant residual landscape and visual effects and that these arise in relation to some of the indicators that make up the complex characteristics and attributes of this AONB and its Natural Beauty. As noted above however, identified effects on the AONB or one of its natural beauty indicators that are assessed to be significant are not in themselves and in isolation unacceptable. The test in NPS EN-1 is whether or not such effects would constitute "*compromising the purposes of designation*" or to phrase it another way, whether the overall integrity of the designation is compromised.

120. In this case, whilst the relevant stretch of AONB coastline is between Southwold and the north side of Orford Ness, significant effects on views across the coast and seascape are limited to a number of locations or sections of the coast along this length, as set out in the Environmental Statement. Due to this and the context in which these effects occur (where energy infrastructure such as existing offshore wind farms and Sizewell Nuclear Power Station are already a recognised component of these views as experienced from walking along the coast), neither the Natural Beauty nor the purposes of designation of the AONB will be compromised, nor will its integrity be undermined. The AONB is capable of absorbing the change to some views, without harm to its natural beauty, or to the special qualities when viewed either in the context of the wider AONB as a whole as per the policy requirements, or indeed even when considered in a more localised context within the AONB.

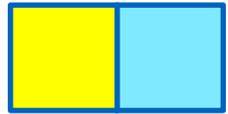


121. Whenever major infrastructure or energy projects are located within or near to an AONB, or other nationally designated landscape, there are likely to be significant effects either on views or character and this has been the case in relation to a number of projects within the United Kingdom. Where such effects have arisen, a balanced judgement has been made concerning the consequences for the designation and its natural beauty and this has led to the approval of projects, notwithstanding the identification of significant effects. The Rampion Offshore Wind Farm decision, discussed previously, provides a good example of this, where some significant visual effects on the South Downs National Park were deemed to be outweighed by the benefits of the renewable energy being proposed.
122. What the East Anglia TWO project gives rise to here are adverse effects occurring at some locations and along some sections of the coastline. These adverse effects relate to some visual attributes of the AONB and its special quality indicators, with those effects arising from development situated some considerable distance outside the AONB and which affect a visual attribute that contributes to and supports, but is not fundamental to, its Natural Beauty. For these reasons, **the harm to the AONB is limited, the purposes of designation of the AONB as a whole will not be compromised as required by the test in paragraph 5.9.12 of NPS EN-1, and weight given to the identified harms should reflect the limited consequences of the harm to the purposes of designating the AONB.**

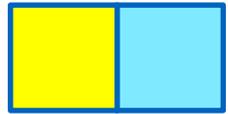


## 7 Summary

123. This Clarification Note provides further confirmation of the position regarding the potential for the Projects to bring about effects on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
124. For the East Anglia TWO project, which lies closer to the coastline, some significant effects on the AONB were identified for the offshore elements. This included significant effects identified in relation to its individual 'special qualities' regarding 'Landscape Quality', 'Scenic Quality' and 'Relative Wildness'. However, as identified in the **Development Consent and Planning Statement** (APP-579) for East Anglia TWO, the construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure will have a relatively low change to the strong overall character of the AONB and will not result in harm to the special qualities of the AONB in overall terms, with the varied and distinctive landscapes of the AONB continuing to define its overall and fundamental character.
125. Due to the limited and localised significant effects on views across the coast and seascape, and the context in which these occur, where energy infrastructure is already a recognised component of these views, neither the Natural Beauty nor the purposes of designation of the AONB will be compromised, nor will its integrity be harmed or undermined.
126. In summary, the Projects have had due regard to statutory purpose of the AONB and with regard to relevant NPS policy, as demonstrated in the application and Environmental Statement:
- Effects on the AONB have been minimised in the preparation of the application through reduction of the site area of the offshore elements and through the location and routing of the onshore elements, including all cabling being underground;
  - Effects have been minimised through reduction in turbine tip height from 300m to 282m post submission;
  - NPS EN-1 only requires minimising of effects through siting and design alterations taking into account "operational and other constraints";
  - NPS EN-1 also already envisages development in and visible from AONBs will occur thus accepting effects will be necessary;
  - Residual effects on the AONB would remain only from a number of locations, would occur only in certain weather and visibility conditions therefore on limited occasions during the year;
  - A vast and open seascape with wide panoramic views would remain;



- The development would not interrupt or block views due to its location more than 30km offshore, beyond the very distant skyline and could not interrupt views of the sweep of seascape leading up to it;
  - The residual effects are therefore not sufficient in magnitude to compromise the special qualities or natural beauty of the AONB, the relevant document on which acknowledges that offshore wind farm development is part of the established character of this AONB;
  - Most effects on the AONB are not significant and the residual effects are of a magnitude that are classed as just above the threshold of significance. They do not compromise the purposes of designation and can therefore be brought into the wider planning balance having been minimised as required by NPS policy.
127. Consequently, no effects are of such a magnitude or significant enough on their own or cumulatively to compromise the purposes of designation of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and the Projects are therefore in accordance with relevant NPS policy on AONB.



# Appendix 1 – Extracts from the Applications Regarding the Impact to the AONB

## 7.1 East Anglia ONE NORTH

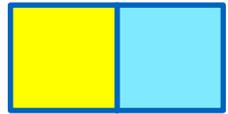
### 7.1.1 Environmental Statement - Chapter 28: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity [concerning the offshore infrastructure]

#### 7.1.1.1 Paragraph 320:

128. 'No physical attributes that contribute to the special qualities of the AONB will be changed as a result of the construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure. The East Anglia ONE North windfarm site, due to its location at long distance outside the AONB, only impacts on the perception of certain special qualities and these are aspects of landscape and scenic quality, relative wildness and tranquillity. The effect resulting from the East Anglia ONE North windfarm site is assessed as not significant (and of low magnitude) on the perception of specific landscape, scenic and relative wildness qualities that derive from changes to views from the AONB out to sea from geographically focused areas along the immediate coastal edges of the AONB where these panoramic, long distances views offshore are an aspect of some of the special qualities. The effects on the big 'Suffolk Skies' are assessed as not significant'.

#### 7.1.1.2 Paragraph 321:

129. 'The construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure will result in a relatively low change to the strong character of the AONB, with its varied and distinctive landscapes continuing to define its overall character. It is not the overall character or physical features of the coastal edges of the AONB that will be changed, but to some degree the specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects of its character from localised areas of the coast, primarily from the northern parts of the AONB between Southwold and Kessingland, where there are interactions between these aesthetic/perceptual aspects of the sea and the East Anglia ONE North windfarm site. These effects arise as a result of change on some particular characteristics, not a change to all of the characteristics since the majority of elements, features and aesthetic/perceptual aspects will continue to contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the AONB and will not be changed or affected in the same way. The perception of most of the other AONB special qualities and key characteristics will remain unaffected by the construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure'.



## 7.1.2 Environmental Statement - Chapter 29: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [concerning the onshore infrastructure]

### 7.1.2.1 Landscape and Visual Effects During Construction

#### 7.1.2.1.1 Paragraph 231:

130. 'One of the primary forms of embedded mitigation for the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure, has been the selection of the substation site outside the AONB. The site selection process indicated the onshore substation and National Grid substation could be accommodated at the Grove Wood, Friston site without significant effects on the special qualities of the AONB'.

#### 7.1.2.1.2 Paragraph 237:

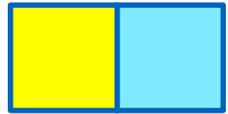
131. 'The construction of the landfall is assessed as having **significant**, but short-term and temporary effects on the landscape character of a localised area of the Estate Sandlands LCT and the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, resulting from the landfall CCS, HDD temporary working area and construction of transition bays to the north of Thorpeness'.

#### 7.1.2.1.3 Paragraph 240:

132. 'The effects of the construction of the onshore cable route have been assessed against the special qualities of the AONB. The effects of the construction of the onshore cable route on the landscape character of the AONB are assessed as significant, but short-term and temporary between the landfall to the north of Thorpeness, Sizewell Gap Road and the edge of the AONB near Leiston (Area A). Along this localised section of the cable route during the construction period, effects are assessed as being **significant**, but short-term and temporary on the landscape/scenic quality, relative wildness/tranquillity of this localised area within the AONB. The effect of the construction of the onshore cable route on the special qualities of the wider AONB within the LVIA study area is assessed as **not significant**, short-term and temporary'.

#### 7.1.2.1.4 Paragraph 245:

133. 'The construction of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure will have **not significant** effects on the character or special qualities of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure are located well outside and at distance from the AONB and its immediate setting. The special qualities of the AONB will not be subject to significant effects as a result of the construction of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure, primarily due the distance of the construction of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure from the AONB and their limited visibility from within the AONB'.



### 7.1.2.2 Landscape and Visual Effects During Operation

#### 7.1.2.2.1 Paragraph 261:

134. 'The operation of the onshore substation and National Grid substation will have **not significant** effects on the character or special qualities of the AONB. The onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure are located outside the AONB and its immediate setting, approximately 1.6km to the north of the AONB at its closest point (where the AONB covers the estuary of the River Alde) and 3.7km to the west of the edge of the main 'coastal' area of the AONB (near Aldringham (Area A)). The special qualities of the AONB will not be subject to change as a result of the operation of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure due the distance of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure from the AONB and their limited visibility from within the AONB'.

### 7.1.3 Development Consent and Planning Statement [concerning both the offshore and onshore infrastructure]

#### 7.1.3.1 Page 291:

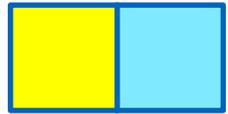
135. 'With regards to natural heritage features, the effect of the construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure is assessed as not significant on all AONB natural heritage features special qualities. The construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure will result in no direct changes to the characteristic expressions of geology which mark the boundary of the AONB or the striking expressions of geology and sedimentation that defines the crumbling coastal cliffs; no direct physical landscape changes to the varied, nationally and internationally protected sites such as SSSI, SPA and SAC; or to the dynamic coastal regimes and resulting transitions in character. The construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure may only result in some perceived changes to the skyline of offshore waters that form the backdrop to the low crumbling cliffs and banks of shingle beaches, but the appearance of a distant offshore windfarm influence would not change the fundamental characteristic of the dynamic coastline and geomorphological features of the coast, or the dynamic processes that will continue to fundamentally shape the coastal environment and its distinctiveness'.

## 7.2 East Anglia TWO

### 7.2.1 Environmental Statement - Chapter 28: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity [concerning the offshore infrastructure]

#### 7.2.1.1 Paragraph 332:

136. 'No physical attributes that contribute to the special qualities of the AONB will be changed as a result of the construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure. The East Anglia TWO windfarm site, due to its location at some distance outside the AONB, only impacts on the perception of certain special qualities and these are aspects of landscape and scenic quality, relative wildness and tranquillity. The effect resulting from the East Anglia TWO windfarm site is



assessed as significant (but of medium, rather than high magnitude) on the perception of specific landscape, scenic and relative wildness qualities that derive from changes to views from the AONB out to sea from geographically focused areas along the immediate coastal edges of the AONB where these panoramic, long distances views offshore are an aspect of some of the special qualities. The effects on the big 'Suffolk Skies' are assessed as not significant'.

#### 7.2.1.2 Paragraph 333:

137. 'The construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure will result in a relatively low change to the strong character of the AONB, with its varied and distinctive landscapes continuing to define its overall character. It is not the overall character or physical features of the coastal edges of the AONB that will be changed, but to some degree the specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects of its character from localised areas of the coast where there are interactions between these aesthetic/perceptual aspects of the sea and the East Anglia TWO windfarm site. These effects arise as a result of change on some particular characteristics, not a change to all of the characteristics since the majority of elements, features and aesthetic/perceptual aspects will continue to contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the AONB and will not be changed or affected in the same way. The perception of most of the other AONB special qualities and key characteristics will remain unaffected by the construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure'.

### 7.2.2 Environmental Statement - Chapter 29: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [concerning the onshore infrastructure]

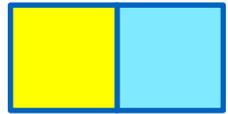
#### 7.2.2.1 Landscape and Visual Effects During Construction

##### 7.2.2.1.1 Paragraph 239:

138. 'The construction of the landfall is assessed as having **significant**, but short-term and temporary effects on the landscape character of a localised area of the Estate Sandlands LCT and the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, resulting from the landfall CCS, HDD temporary working area and construction of transition bays to the north of Thorpeness'.

##### 7.2.2.1.2 Paragraph 242:

139. 'The effects of the construction of the onshore cable route have been assessed against the special qualities of the AONB. The effects of the construction of the onshore cable route on the landscape character of the AONB are assessed as significant, but short-term and temporary between the landfall to the north of Thorpeness, Sizewell Gap Road and the edge of the AONB near Leiston (Area A). Along this localised section of the cable route during the construction period, effects are assessed as being **significant**, but short-term and temporary on the landscape/scenic quality, relative wildness/tranquillity of this localised area within the AONB. The effect of the construction of the onshore cable route on the special



qualities of the wider AONB within the LVIA study area is assessed as **not significant**, short-term and temporary’.

#### 7.2.2.1.3 Paragraph 247:

140. ‘The construction of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure will have **not significant** effects on the character or special qualities of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure are located well outside and at distance from the AONB and its immediate setting. The special qualities of the AONB will not be subject to significant effects as a result of the construction of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure, primarily due the distance of the construction of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure from the AONB and their limited visibility from within the AONB’.

#### 7.2.2.2 Landscape and Visual Effects During Operation

##### 7.2.2.2.1 Paragraph 263:

141. ‘The operation of the onshore substation and National Grid substation will have **not significant** effects on the character or special qualities of the AONB. The onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure are located outside the AONB and its immediate setting, approximately 1.6km to the north of the AONB at its closest point (where the AONB covers the estuary of the River Alde) and 3.7km to the west of the edge of the main ‘coastal’ area of the AONB (near Aldringham (Area A)). The special qualities of the AONB will not be subject to change as a result of the operation of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure due the distance of the onshore substation and National Grid infrastructure from the AONB and their limited visibility from within the AONB’.

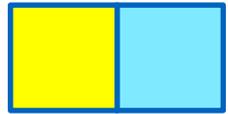
### 7.2.3 Development Consent and Planning Statement [concerning both the offshore and onshore infrastructure]

#### 7.2.3.1 Pages 286-289:

142. ‘A key design decision was the site selection for the substation and National Grid substation outside of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This process is described in **ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives, section 4.9**. One of the key site selection principles was to minimise significant impacts on the ‘special qualities’ of the AONB. The AONB Special Qualities appraisal (detailed in **ES Appendix 4.3**) concluded that if the substation(s) were to be sited in the final selected locations, there is likely to be no significant effects on the special qualities of the AONB.
143. As demonstrated in **ES Figure 29.3**, there is some overlap of the onshore development (landfall and onshore cable route) with the AONB.

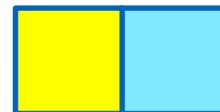


144. Impacts during construction are assessed as not significant for Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Area B, between Thorpeness, Aldeburgh and Snape, however they will be significant at Area A, between Thorpeness, Sizewell and Leiston.
145. At Area A (ES **Figure 29.8**) there will be a temporary and short term physical loss of hedgerows and scrub-heathland habitat during construction. In the setting of the low coastal cliffs at the landfall, the addition of elements during the construction period will change the simple landscape composition and result in changes to the sense of isolation.
146. The AONB's protection will continue to be ensured as the significant impact predicted for area A will be short term and temporary. All hedgerows will be replanted where possible. Bespoke hedgerow replanting locations and planting mixes will be specified in the **OLEMS**, secured under the requirements of the draft DCO.
147. Potential impacts on special qualities of the AONB have been assessed in ES **Appendix 28.4** and summarised in **section 28.7.3.2.3** of ES **Chapter 28 Seascape Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment**. The special qualities are:
- Landscape Quality;
  - Scenic Quality;
  - Relative Wildness;
  - Relative Tranquillity; and
  - Natural Heritage Features.
148. No significant effects are predicted for Relative Tranquillity or Natural Heritage Features. No physical attributes that contribute to the special qualities of the AONB will be changed as a result of the construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure. The East Anglia TWO windfarm site, located outside the AONB, may only impact on the perception of special qualities - landscape and scenic quality, relative wildness and tranquillity.
149. There will be **significant** impacts during construction and operation on **Landscape Quality**, in particular on the close-knit interrelationship of semi-natural and cultural landscapes and the seascape setting of the AONB e.g. the simplicity of the landscape.
150. **Significant** effects are also predicted for **Scenic Quality**, notably the unique character defined by semi-natural and cultural landscapes and sea cliffs contrasting to flat and gently rolling Sandlings heaths and farmland. The East Anglia TWO offshore windfarm site does not affect the immediate setting of the



AONB, but will be seen on and beyond the horizon, as a ‘horizon development’ to a large open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ its seascape/landscape.

151. **Significant** effects are predicted for **Relative Wildness** only in respect of the open and expansive views offshore. This is a particular effect on one aspect of relative wildness that derives from changes to views from the AONB.
152. From the southern parts of the AONB coastline, there is little or no visibility of the East Anglia ONE North windfarm site, therefore the potential for additional cumulative effects on the special qualities of the AONB can largely be discounted, with the effect resulting entirely from the presence of the East Anglia TWO windfarm site.
153. It is not the overall character or physical features of the coastal edges of the AONB that will be changed, but instead it is specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects of its character relating to panoramic views offshore at the coast that will experience change. The construction and operation of the offshore infrastructure will have a relatively low change to the strong overall character of the AONB and will not result in harm to the special qualities of the AONB in overall terms, with the varied and distinctive landscapes of the AONB continuing to define its overall and fundamental character’.

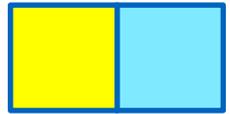


## Appendix 2 –Operational Offshore Windfarms and their distance from AONBs and National Parks

154. This Appendix provides details of existing operational offshore wind farms around the coastline of England and Wales and their distance from AONBs and National Parks. It confirms that there are already many operational schemes which lie closer to an AONB or National Park than would be the case for East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO (at a distance of 37.7km and 32.6km from the AONB respectively). The schemes are set out in **Table 1** below and illustrates on Figures 1 to 7 which follow.

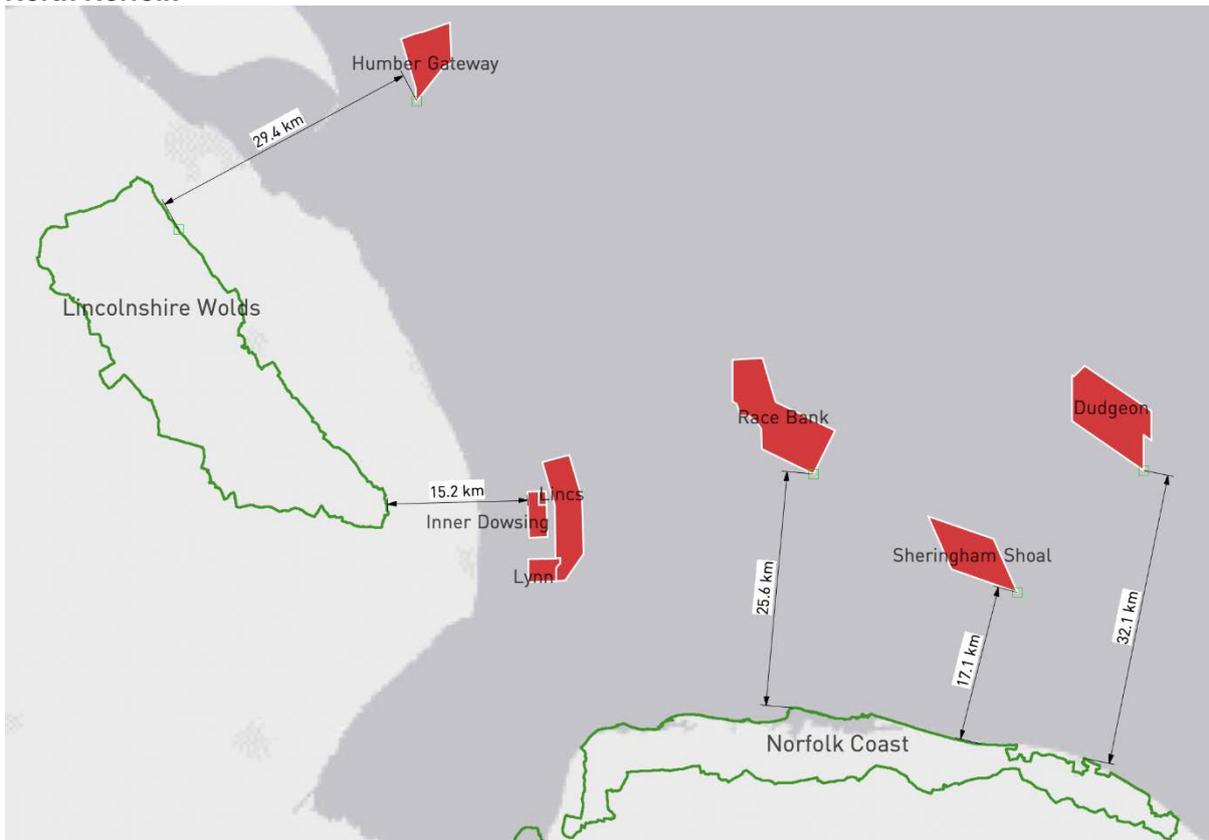
**Table 1 Overview of Operational Offshore Wind Farms and their distance from AONBs and National Parks**

| Project                 | Nearest AONB and/or National Park and Distance from closest turbine | Turbine Heights |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Humber Gateway          | 29.4km – Lincolnshire Wolds AONB                                    | 136m            |
| Inner Dowsing           | 15.2km – Lincolnshire Wolds AONB                                    | 150m            |
| Lincs                   | 17.4km – Lincolnshire Wolds AONB                                    | 160m            |
| Lynn                    | 16.3km – Lincolnshire Wolds AONB                                    | 150m            |
| Race Bank               | 25.6km – Norfolk Coast AONB                                         | 177m            |
| Sheringham Shoal        | 17.1km – Norfolk Coast AONB                                         | 150m            |
| Dudgeon                 | 32.1km – Norfolk Coast AONB                                         | 177m            |
| Scroby Sands            | 3.1km – Norfolk Coast AONB<br>8km – The Broads National Park        | 108m            |
| Greater Gabbard         | 24.9km - Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB                              | 133.5m          |
| Galloper                | 28.3km - Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB                              | 180.5m          |
| Gunfleet Sands I        | 21.8km – Dedham Vale AONB                                           | 133.5m          |
| Kentish Flats           | 20.3km – Kent Downs AONB                                            | 115m            |
| Kentish Flats Extension | 19km – Kent Downs AONB                                              | 150m            |
| Thanet                  | 29.3km – Kent Downs AONB                                            | 125m            |
| Rampion                 | 14.4km – South Downs National Park                                  | 140m            |

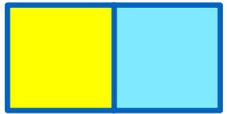


| Project              | Nearest AONB and/or National Park and Distance from closest turbine | Turbine Heights |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Burbo Bank Extension | 14.6km – Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB                         | 187m            |
| Burbo Bank           | 18.8km – Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB                         | 133.5m          |
| North Hoyle          | 8.7km – Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB                          | 120m            |
| Rhyl Flats           | 14.8km – Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB<br>22.7km Anglesey AONB | 128.5m          |
| Ormonde              | 12.6km Lake District National Park                                  | 163m            |
| Barrow               | 29.5km – Arnside and Silverdale AONB                                | 120m            |

**Figure 1 – Operational Offshore Wind Farms and their distance from AONBs - Lincolnshire/ North Norfolk**



**Figure 2 – Operational Offshore Wind Farms and their distance from AONBs and National Parks – East Norfolk**



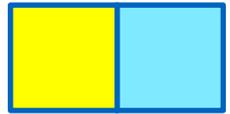
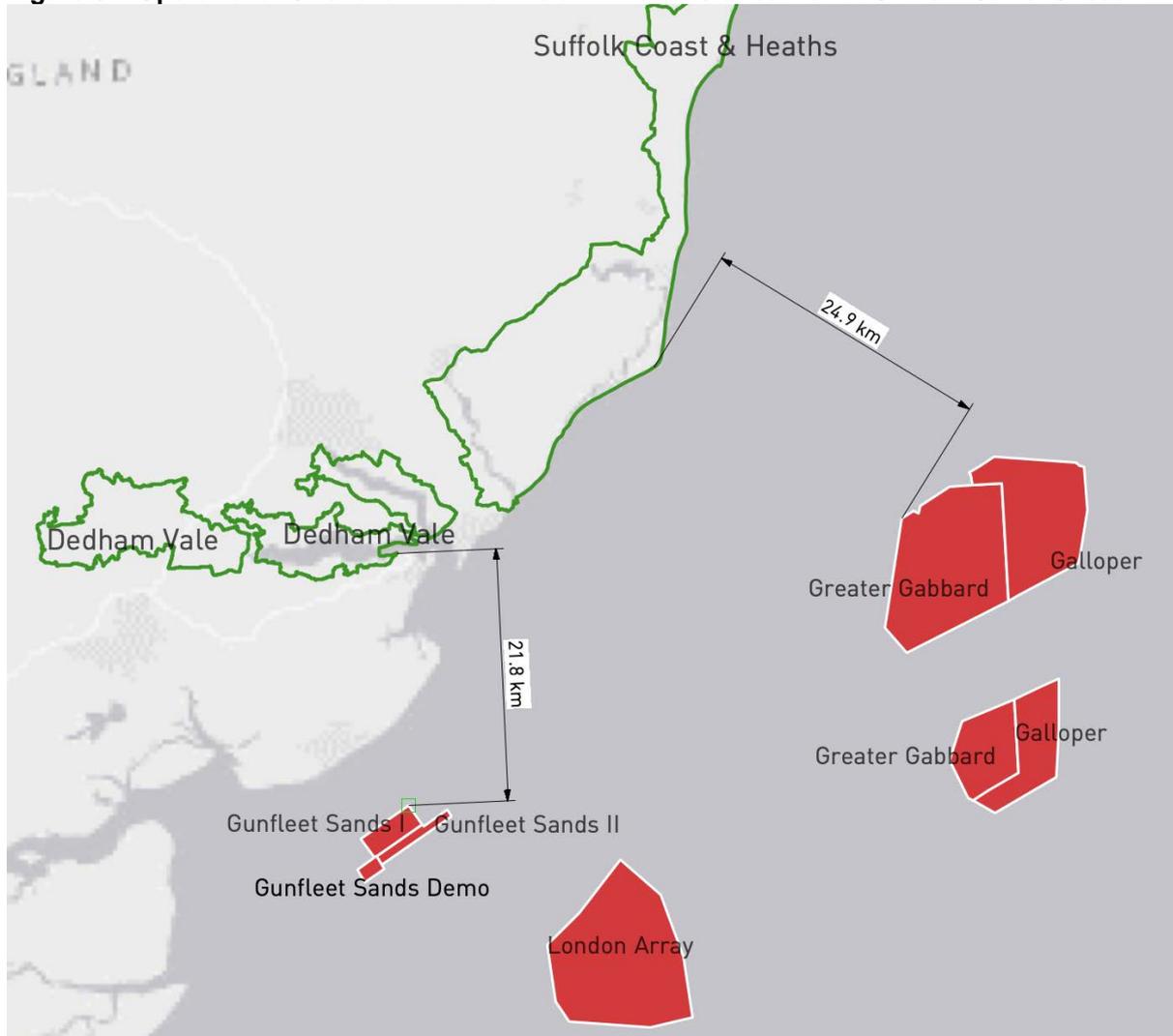


Figure 3 – Operational Offshore Wind Farms and their distance from AONBs – Suffolk/Essex



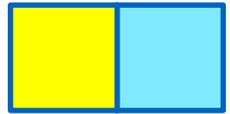


Figure 4 – Operational Offshore Wind Farms and their distance from AONBs – Kent

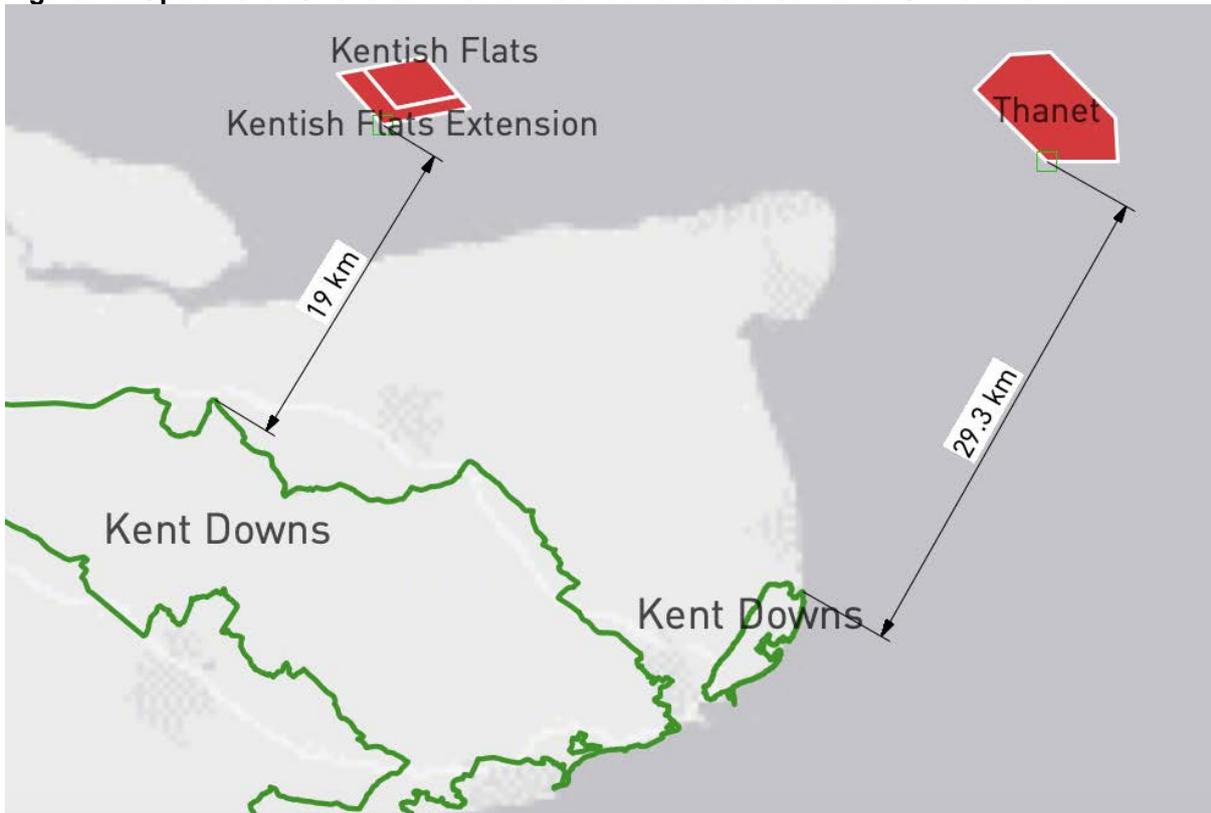
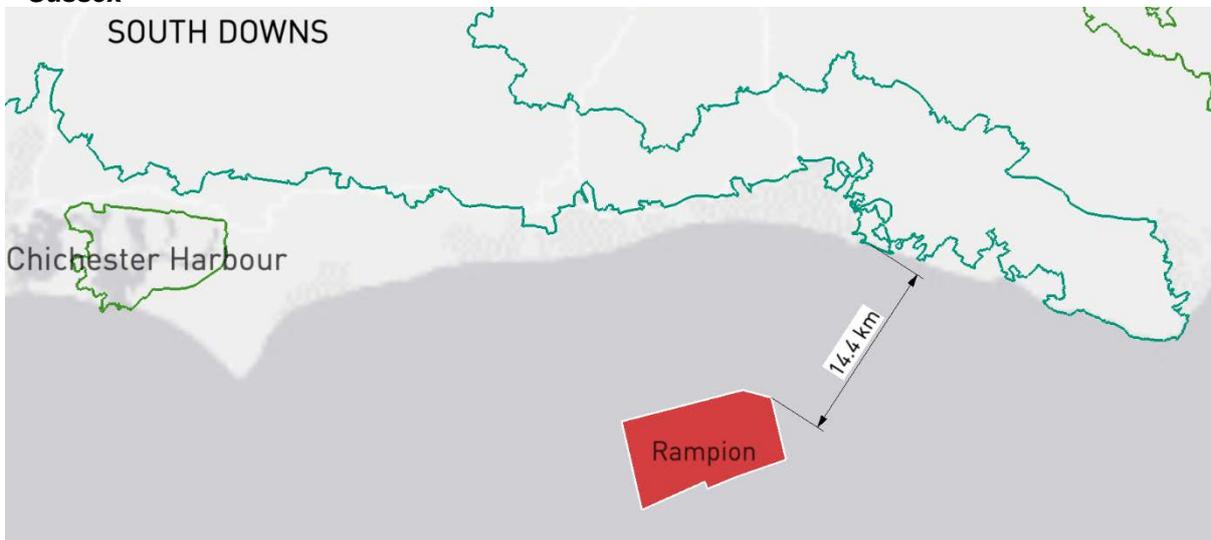


Figure 5 – Operational Offshore Wind Farms and their distance from AONBs and National Parks – Sussex



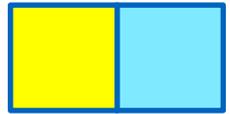


Figure 6 – Operational Offshore Wind Farms and their distance from AONBs – North Wales

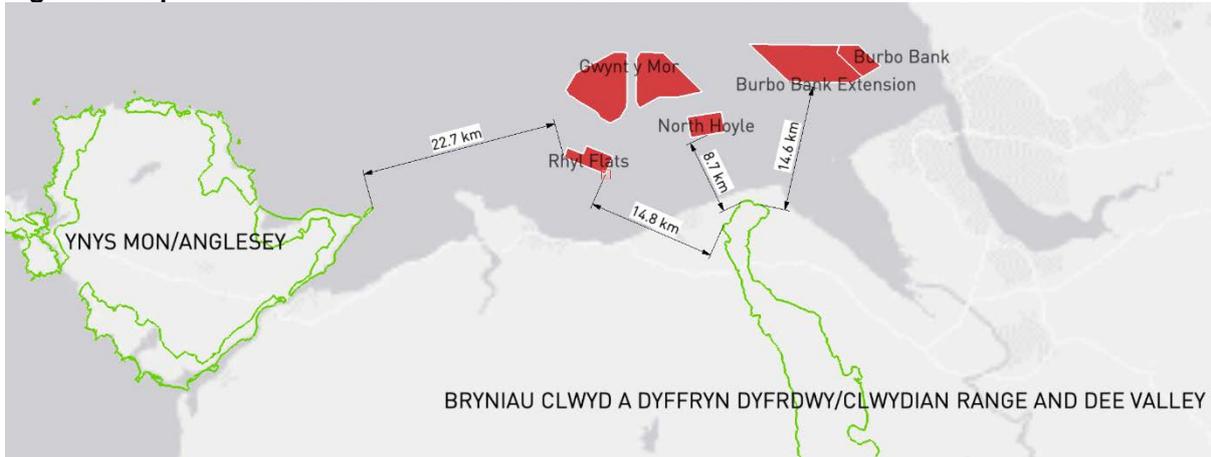


Figure 7 – Operational Offshore Wind Farms and their distance from AONBs and National Parks – Lake District

