

SUNNICA ENERGY FARM

EN010106

Volume 6

6.2 Appendix 12A: Relevant Legislation and Policy for Socio-Economics and Land Use

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009



Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed Forms and
Procedure) Regulations 2009**

Sunnica Energy Farm

Environmental Statement

**Appendix 12A: Relevant Legislation and Policy for Socio-Economics
and Land Use**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this appendix

- 1.1.1 This ES appendix identifies and describes the legislation, policy and supporting guidance considered relevant to the assessment of the likely significant socio-economic and land use effects of the Scheme. Legislation and policy are considered at national and local levels.
- 1.1.2 This ES appendix does not assess the Scheme against legislation and policy. Instead the purpose of considering legislation and policy in the EIA is twofold:
- a. to identify legislation and policy that could influence the sensitivity of receptors (and therefore the significance of effects) and any requirements for mitigation; and
 - b. to identify legislation and policy that could influence the methodology of the EIA. For example, a policy may require the assessment of an impact or the use of a specific methodology.
- 1.1.3 The following sections identify and describe the legislation, policy and supporting guidance considered relevant to the socio-economic and land use assessment and where in **Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use** of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.1] information is provided.

2 National Legislation, Policy and Guidance

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 The main legislation relevant to the socio economic and land use effects of the Scheme includes The Planning Act 2008 (Ref 1) is an Act of the Parliament intended to speed up the process for approving major new infrastructure projects such as airports, roads, harbours, energy facilities such as nuclear power and waste facilities. Part 3 of the Planning Act 2008 introduces the concept of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects ('NSIPs') and the elements that classify a project as a NSIP. The Planning Act 2008 also prescribes the decision-making process for a promoter seeking development consent for a NSIP and the requirements needed. The Scheme is classified as an NSIP under sections 14(1)(a) and 15(2) of the Planning Act 2008 and therefore the Act is the primary piece of legislation that governs the Application and the consenting process.

2.2 Policy

National Policy Statements

2.2.1 The Scheme's proposed energy generating technology is not currently specifically referenced by a National Policy Statement ('NPS') however in lieu of a technology specific NPS, the EIA takes account of the following NPSs, which are considered to be matters that will be important and relevant to the Secretary of State's decision as to whether to grant a DCO for the Scheme:

- a. Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Ref 2),
- b. National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (Ref 3),
and
- c. National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (Ref 4).

2.2.2 The NPSs set out the Government's energy policy, the need for new infrastructure and guidance for determining an application for a DCO. The NPSs include specific criteria and issues which should be covered by applicants' assessments of the effects of their scheme, and how the decision maker should consider these impacts.

2.2.3 The relevant NPS requirements, together with an indication of where in the ES chapter the information provided to address these requirements, are provided in **Table 2-1**.

Table 2-1 Relevant NPS requirements for the socio-economic and land use assessment

Relevant NPS paragraph reference	Requirement of the NPS	Where in the ES chapter is information provided to address this
NPS EN-1		
Paragraph 5.10.8	Applicants should seek to minimise impacts on the best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification) and preferably use land in areas of poorer quality (grades 3b, 4 and 5) except where this would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations.	This is addressed in Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2] , in the Agriculture and Soil sections.
Paragraph 5.10.9	Applicants should safeguard any mineral resources on the proposed site as far as possible, taking into account the long-term potential of the land use after any future decommissioning has taken place.	This is considered in Section 12.6 – Baseline Conditions (Development Land section), and Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2] .
Paragraph 5.12.2	Where the project is likely to have socio-economic impacts at local or regional levels, the applicant should undertake and include in their application an assessment of these impacts as part of the Environmental Statement (see Section 4.2).	This is considered throughout Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2] .
Paragraph 5.12.3	This assessment should consider all relevant socio-economic impacts, which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the creation of jobs and training opportunities; ▪ the provision of additional local services and improvements to local infrastructure, including the provision of educational and visitor facilities; ▪ effects on tourism; ▪ the impact of a changing influx of workers during the different construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the energy infrastructure. This could change the local population dynamics and could alter the demand for services and facilities in the settlements nearest to the construction work (including community facilities and physical infrastructure such as energy, water, transport and waste). There could also be effects on social cohesion depending on how populations and service provision change as a result of the development; and ▪ cumulative effects – if development consent were to be granted to for a number of projects within a region and these were developed in a similar 	This is considered in Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects, and Section 12.11 – Cumulative Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2] .

Relevant NPS paragraph reference	Requirement of the NPS	Where in the ES chapter is information provided to address this
	timeframe, there could be some short-term negative effects, for example a potential shortage of construction workers to meet the needs of other industries and major projects within the region.	
Paragraph 5.12.4	Applicants should describe the existing socio-economic conditions in the areas surrounding the proposed development and should also refer to how the development's socio-economic impacts correlate with local planning policies.	This is considered in the Section 12.6 – Baseline Conditions of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2].
Paragraph 5.12.5	Socio-economic impacts may be linked to other impacts, for example the visual impact of a development is considered in Section 5.9 but may also have an impact on tourism and local businesses	This is considered in Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2].
Paragraph 5.12.8	The IPC [now Planning Inspectorate, with the decision made by the Secretary of State] should consider any relevant positive provisions the developer has made or is proposing to make to mitigate impacts (for example through planning obligations) and any legacy benefits that may arise as well as any options for phasing development in relation to the socio-economic impacts.	This is considered in Section 12.7 – Embedded Design Mitigation of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2].
Paragraph 5.12.9	The IPC should consider whether mitigation measures are necessary to mitigate any adverse socio-economic impacts of the development. For example, high quality design can improve the visual and environmental experience for visitors and the local community alike.	This is considered in Section 12.9 – Additional Mitigation and Enhancement Measures of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2].

Draft National Policy Statements

- 2.2.4 The Government is currently reviewing and updating the Energy NPSs. It is doing this in order to reflect its policies and strategic approach for the energy system that is set out in the Energy White Paper (December 2020), and to ensure that the planning policy framework enables the delivery of the infrastructure required for the country's transition to net zero carbon emissions. As part of the Energy NPS review process, the Government published a suite of Draft Energy NPSs for consultation on 6 September 2021. These include the following Draft NPSs, which are expected to be important and relevant to the Secretary of State's decision, and have therefore been taken into account by the EIA:
- a. Draft Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Draft NPS EN-1),
 - b. Draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy (EN-3) (Draft NPS EN-3), and
 - c. Draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5).
- 2.2.5 Where the relevant Draft NPS contain requirements that differ from the requirements of the NPSs, **Table 2-2** indicates where the information to address these requirements is provided within the ES Chapter.

Table 2-2 Relevant Draft NPS requirements for the socio-economic and land use assessment

Relevant NPS paragraph reference	Requirement of the NPS	Where in the ES chapter is information provided to address this
Draft NPS EN-1		
Paragraph 5.11.8	<p>Applicants should seek to minimise impacts on the best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification) and preferably use land in areas of poorer quality (grades 3b, 4 and 5) except where this would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations. Applicants should also identify any effects and seek to minimise impacts on soil quality taking into account any mitigation measures proposed. For developments on previously developed land, applicants should ensure that they have considered the risk posed by land contamination, and where contamination is present, applicants should consider opportunities for remediation where possible. Applicants are encouraged to develop and implement a Soil Management Plan which could help minimise potential land contamination.</p>	<p>This is addressed in Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2], in the Agriculture and Soil sections. Appendix 16C: Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2] sets out the provision for a Soil Management Plan, which will be included within the Construction Environmental Management Plan.</p>
Paragraph 5.13.3	<p>This assessment should consider all relevant socio-economic impacts, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the creation of jobs and training opportunities. Applicants may wish to provide information on the sustainability of the jobs created, including where they will help to develop the skills needed for the UK's transition to Net Zero; • the contribution to the development of low-carbon industries at the local and regional level as well as nationally; • the provision of additional local services and improvements to local infrastructure, including the provision of educational and visitor facilities; • any indirect beneficial impacts for the region hosting the infrastructure, in particular in relation to use of local support services and supply chains; • effects on tourism; • the impact of a changing influx of workers during the different construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the energy infrastructure. This could change the local population dynamics and could alter the demand for services and facilities in the settlements nearest to the construction work (including community facilities and physical infrastructure such as energy, water, transport and waste). There could also be effects on social cohesion depending on how populations and service provision change as a result of the development; and 	<p>This is addressed in Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects, and Section 12.11 – Cumulative Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2]</p>

Relevant NPS paragraph reference	Requirement of the NPS	Where in the ES chapter is information provided to address this
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cumulative effects - if development consent were to be granted to for a number of projects within a region and these were developed in a similar timeframe, there could be some short-term negative effects, for example a potential shortage of construction workers to meet the needs of other industries and major projects within the region. 	
Paragraph 5.13.5	Socio-economic impacts may be linked to other impacts, for example the visual impact of a development is considered in Section 5.10 but may also have an impact on tourism and local businesses. Applicants are encouraged, where possible, to ensure local suppliers are considered in any supply chain.	This is addressed in Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2] , in the Combined Effects on Receptors section.
Paragraph 5.13.6	Applicants should also consider developing accommodation strategies where appropriate, especially during construction and decommissioning phases, that would include for the need to provide temporary accommodation for construction workers if required.	This is addressed in Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2] .
Paragraph 5.13.9	The Secretary of State should consider any relevant positive provisions the applicant has made or is proposing to make to mitigate impacts (for example through planning obligations) and any legacy benefits that may arise as well as any options for phasing development in relation to the socio-economic impacts. The Secretary of State may wish to include a requirement that specifies the approval by the local authority of an employment and skills plan detailing arrangements to promote local employment and skills development opportunities, including apprenticeships, education, engagement with local schools and colleges and training programmes to be enacted.	This is addressed in Section 12.8 - Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics and Land Use of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.2] , and the Skills and Employment plan.
Draft NPS EN-3		
Paragraph 2.48.13	Solar is a highly flexible technology and as such can be deployed on a wide variety of land types. Where possible, ground mounted Solar PV projects should utilise previously developed land, brownfield land, contaminated land, industrial land, or agricultural land preferably of classification 3b, 4, and 5 (avoiding the use of “Best and Most Versatile” cropland where possible). However, land type should not be a predominating factor in determining the suitability of the site location.	The Alternatives Site Assessment presented in Appendix 4A of this Environmental Assessment [EN010106/APP/6.2] describes how land type has been considered in the selection of the site. Appendix 12B of this Environmental Assessment [EN010106/APP/6.2] presents the findings of the Agricultural Land Classification survey for the Scheme.

Relevant NPS paragraph reference	Requirement of the NPS	Where in the ES chapter is information provided to address this
		Section 12.8 of Chapter 12 of this Environmental Assessment [EN010106/APP/6.1] presents the findings of the assessment.
Paragraph 2.48.14	The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) is the only approved system for grading agricultural quality in England and Wales and should be used to establish the ALC and identify the soil types to inform soil management at the construction, operation and decommissioning phases. This should be extended to the underground cabling and access routes. The soil survey may also inform the suitable beneficial use of the land during the operational phase. Criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land using the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) of England and Wales is decided by Natural England and considerations relating to land classification are expected to be made with reference to this guidance, or any successor to it.	The Agricultural Land Classification system has been used to grade the agricultural land quality of the four main Sites within the Scheme. The results of this are presented in Appendix 12B of this Environmental Assessment [EN010106/APP/6.2] presents the findings of the Agricultural Land Classification survey for the Scheme. Section 12.8 of Chapter 12 of this Environmental Assessment [EN010106/APP/6.1] presents the findings of the assessment.
Paragraph 2.48.15	Whilst the development of ground mounted solar arrays is not prohibited on sites of agricultural land classified 1, 2 and 3a, or designated for their natural beauty, or recognised for ecological or archaeological importance, the impacts of such are expected to be considered and are discussed under paragraphs 2.50 and 2.53. It is recognised that at this scale, it is likely that applicants' developments may use some agricultural land, however applicants should explain their choice of site, noting the preference for development to be on brownfield and non-agricultural land.	The Alternatives Site Assessment presented in Appendix 4A of this Environmental Assessment [EN010106/APP/6.2] describes how land type has been considered in the selection of the site. Appendix 12B of this Environmental Assessment [EN010106/APP/6.2] presents the findings of the Agricultural Land Classification survey for the Scheme. Section 12.8 of Chapter 12 of this Environmental Assessment [EN010106/APP/6.1] presents the findings of the assessment.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.2.6 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.
- 2.2.7 The relevant NPPF paragraphs, together with an indication of where in the ES chapter the information is provided to address these requirements, are provided in **Table 2-3**.

Table 2-3 Relevant NPPF requirements for the socio-economic and land use assessment

Relevant NPPF paragraph reference	Requirement of the NPPF	Where in the ES chapter is information provided to address this
Paragraph 81	<p>Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.</p>	<p>The assessment contained in Chapter 12: Socio-Economics of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.1] includes an estimate of 1,685 jobs created in total during the construction and decommissioning phases, taking into account the impact of leakage effects, displacement, and multiplier effects of employment. This is estimated to lead to a total direct gross value added per annum of £57,978,126 during the construction phase.</p> <p>During operation of the Scheme it is estimated that a net total of 29 jobs will be directly generated by the proposal. The impact of permanent long-term employment loss following decommissioning has been assessed as a permanent very low adverse, which is not considered significant.</p>
Paragraph 84	<p>Planning policies and decisions should enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. 	<p>Chapter 12: Socio-Economics of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.1] concludes that there would be no adverse effect on residential properties, business properties or community facilities as a result of the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Scheme.</p>
Paragraph 92	<p>Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts 	<p>The Scheme’s cumulative effects can be found in Section 12.11 of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.1].</p>

Relevant NPPF paragraph reference	Requirement of the NPPF	Where in the ES chapter is information provided to address this
	<p>that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;</p> <p>b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and</p> <p>c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.</p>	
Paragraph 93	<p>To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:</p> <p>....;</p> <p>b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;</p> <p>c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Chapter 12: Socio-Economics of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.1] concludes that there would be no adverse effect on residential properties, business properties or community facilities as a result of the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Scheme.</p>
Paragraph 100	<p>Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.</p>	<p>Three PRowS (W-257/002/0, W-257/002/X, and W-257/007/0) are located within the boundary of Sunnica East Site A, which run from Mortimer Lane in the south to Beck Road in the north. Within the boundary of Sunnica East Site B. there is PRow (W-257/003/0) which runs along the south-western boundary from Turnpike Road at Red Lodge in the south-east to Badlingham Manor in the north-west and an unclassified road (U6006), which is a publicly accessible route, including for equestrians, extends northwards from Elms Road to Worlington.</p>

Relevant NPPF paragraph reference	Requirement of the NPPF	Where in the ES chapter is information provided to address this
		<p>As detailed in Section 12.7 of Chapter 12: Socio-Economics of this Environmental Statement [EN010106/APP/6.1], appropriate measures to mitigate temporary impacts on users of PRowS during the construction and decommissioning phases have been proposed. The temporary closures and, where appropriate, diversions will be supported by clear signs and where possible will be planned and programmed to minimise disruption to users.</p>

- 2.2.8 Paragraph 001 of the Natural Environment guidance (Ref 6) directs that:
"Planning policies and decisions should take account of the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land."
- 2.2.9 Under Renewable and Low Carbon Energy guidance (Ref 7), paragraph 013 states that particular factors a planning decision maker will need to consider include *"where a proposal involves greenfield land, whether (i) the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary and poorer quality land has been used in preference to higher quality land; and (ii) the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around arrays."*

National Economic Development Policy

- 2.2.10 The Government's Industrial Strategy White Paper (Ref 8) outlines its ambitions to increase productivity and drive growth across the whole country. It outlines its ambitions to increase productivity and drive growth across the whole country. The strategy sets out four 'Grand Challenges' to ensure Britain is at the forefront of the industries of the future, one of these being Clean Growth to lead the world in the development, manufacture and use of low carbon technologies. One of the key tenants of the White Paper is the upgrading of infrastructure to support productivity, and ultimately, economic growth. One of the focuses of upgrading this infrastructure is to provide clean and affordable energy.

2.3 Guidance

- 2.3.1 Consideration has also been given to the National Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') (Ref 9), which provides guidance on planning and the economy and considers the existing and potential future needs of the population in terms of economic development, jobs and employment opportunities. The PPG does not contain specific policies for NSIPs, however it states that applications in relation to NSIPs are to be determined in accordance with the decision-making framework set out in the Planning Act 2008 and relevant NPSs, as well as any other matters that are considered both important and relevant. The contents of the guidance are not materially relevant to the assessment of socio-economic and land use effects as the content does not influence the undertaking of the assessment of effects relevant to the Scheme.
- 2.3.2 The Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment ('IEMA') published in 2016 provides guidelines (Ref 10) on how to write an Environmental Impact Assessment using a robust authoritative guide on good EIA practice that aims to assist all participants in the development process. The chapter have followed the guidance set out by IEMA following the set out process of writing an EIA as well as the practices to develop and manage the EIA.
- 2.3.3 The NPPF does not provide direction on the potential effect of development on individual farm businesses. In the absence of such guidance, the farming circumstances assessment in **Chapter 12** of this Environmental Statement **[EN010106/APP/6.1]** follows the advice given by the superseded Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 (PPG7) (Ref 11). It considers the effect of development on the following factors:

- a. The location of development in relation to farms;
- b. Farm size and structure;
- c. Buildings and other fixed equipment; and
- d. Irrigation and other effects of development on agriculture such as impact on drainage networks.

3 Local Legislation, Policy and Guidance

3.1 Policy

3.1.1 The following local policy is relevant to the assessment of the socio-economic and land use effects of the Scheme.

Table 3-1 Local Policy review

Relevant Document	Relevant policies
East Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan Adopted April 2015 (Ref 12), reviewed 2020 (Ref 13)	Policy Growth 1: Levels of housing, employment and retail growth Policy EMP6: Development affecting the horse racing industry
Forest Heath District Council Core Strategy Adopted 2010 (Ref 14)	Spatial Objective ENV2 Policy CS4: Reduce Emissions, Mitigate and Adapt to future Climate Change
Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Local Plan: Joint Development Management Policies Document (last updated February 2015) (Ref 15)	Policy CS6: Sustainable Economic and Tourism Development Policy CS10: Employment in the Country Policy DM5: Development in the Countryside Policy DM31: Farm Diversification Policy DM44: Rights of Way
New Anglia LEP Local Industrial Strategy (Ref 16)	Objective - 'Clean Energy: Powering the world' strategy.
Local Energy East Strategy (Ref 17)	Theme 1: 'Clean Economic Growth' and Theme 3: 'Secure, local, affordable low-carbon consumption'
Suffolk County Council's Suffolk Growth Strategy (Ref 18)	Section 2: 'Green Economic Growth'
Transforming Suffolk: Suffolk Community Strategy 2008-2028 (Ref 19)	Objective: 'A Prosperous and Vibrant Economy' Objective: 'The Greenest County' and 'Learning and skills for the future'
Suffolk County Council Minerals & Waste Local Plan Adopted 2020 (Ref 20)	Policy MP10: Mineral consultation and safeguarding areas Policy WP18: Safeguarding of waste management sites Policy MS10: Worlington - allocates new mineral extraction areas and the existing quarry.
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan Adopted 2021 (Ref 21)	Policy 6: Mineral Development Areas (MDAs) and Mineral Allocation Areas Policy 10: Waste Management Areas Policy 11: Water Recycling Centres Policy 15: Transport Infrastructure Areas (TIAs) Policy 16: Consultation Areas

3.2 Guidance

3.2.1 The assessment has considered the following local policy guidance:

- a. Section 2.2.1: East Cambridgeshire District Council Supplementary Planning Document: Renewable Energy Development (Commercial Scale) October 2014 (Ref 22) - reference to renewable energy schemes contributing to the

reduction of carbon emissions, and the fact they can also have wider environmental, economic and social benefits and section 8 in relation to effects upon Public Rights of Way ('ProW') and provision being made to offset adverse effects on existing PRoW.

- b. Natural England Technical Information Note 049 (TIN049) Agricultural Land Classification: Protecting the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (Ref 23), provides guidance on the application of the Agricultural Land Classification Guidelines (Ref 24), including survey methodology.

3.2.2 **Table 3-2** below details the definitions of ALC grades.

Table 3-2 - Agricultural Land Classification Guidelines

Grade	Definition
Grade 1	Land with no or very minor limitations to agricultural use. A wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown with high yields and less variable than on land of lower quality.
Grade 2	Land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivation or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land in the grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable root crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1.
Grade 3	Land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivation or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land in the grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable root crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1.
Subgrade 3a	Land capable of consistently producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops especially cereals, or moderate yields of a wide range of crops including cereals, grass, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet and the less demanding horticultural crops.
Subgrade 3b	Land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass which can be grazed or harvested over most of the year.
Grade 4	Land with severe limitations which significantly restrict the range of crops and / or level of yields. It is mainly suited to grass with occasional arable crops (e.g. cereals and forage crops) the yields of which are variable. In moist climates, yields of grass may be moderate to high but there may be difficulties in utilisation. The grade also includes very droughty arable land.
Grade 5	Land with very severe limitations which restrict use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.

4 References

- Ref 1 UK Legislation (2008): Planning Act 2008
- Ref 2 Department of Energy and Climate Change, (2011); Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1). London: The Stationery Office.
- Ref 3 Department of Energy and Climate Change, (2011); b) National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3). London: The Stationery Office.
- Ref 4 Department of Energy and Climate Change, (2011); c) National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5). London: The Stationery Office.
- Ref 5 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), (2019); National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). MHCLG.
- Ref 6 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), (2019); Natural Environment Guidance. MHCLG
- Ref 7 MHCLG. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), (2015); Renewable and Low Carbon Energy guidance. MHCLG.
- Ref 8 HM Government, Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future, November 2017
- Ref 9 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), (2019); Planning Practice Guidance. MHCLG.
- Ref 10 Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2016); Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessments.
- Ref 11 Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 (PPG7)
- Ref 12 East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC), (2015): East Cambridgeshire Local Plan
- Ref 13 East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC), (2020): East Cambridgeshire Local Plan- Second Review
- Ref 14 Forest Heath District Council (FHDC), (2010): Forest Heath Core Strategy
- Ref 15 West Suffolk Council (2015); Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Local Plan: Joint Development Management Policies Document
- Ref 16 Suffolk County Council (2020); Suffolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan
- Ref 17 New Anglia LEP, (2020); Norfolk & Suffolk Local Industrial Strategy.
- Ref 18 Local Energy East Network, (2018); Local Energy East Strategy
- Ref 19 Suffolk County Council, (2018); Suffolk Growth Strategy (2028)
- Ref 20 Suffolk Strategy Partnership (2008); Transforming Suffolk- Suffolk's Community Strategy (2008-2028).
- Ref 21 Cambridge County Council (2021); Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan
- Ref 22 East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC), (2014): East Cambridgeshire District Council SPD: Renewable Energy Development

- Ref 23 Natural England, (2009): TIN049 - Agricultural Land Classification: Protecting the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.
- Ref 24 Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF), (1988): Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land.