



Galloper Wind Farm Project
Environmental Statement – Chapter 2: Project Need, Policy
Framework and Guidance
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2 POLICY FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following Chapter provides a summary of the need for renewable energy and the benefits associated with offshore wind generation. Following this, is an overview of the international, national and regional planning policies and guidance which govern renewable energy development, and which have direct relevance for the proposed Galloper Wind Farm (GWF) project.

2.2 Project Need

2.2.1 The UK has committed to sourcing 15% of its total energy needs from renewable sources by 2020 under the 2009 Directive on Renewable Energy (2009/28/EC) including electricity, heat and transport. The UK has also made legally binding commitments through the Climate Change Act 2008. Projections suggest that by 2020 about 30% or more of our electricity could come from renewable sources, compared to 6.7% in 2009 (Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), 2010a).

2.2.2 The Government's commitment to the Renewables Target was re-affirmed in the Spending Review of 20 October 2010 with the continuation of the Renewables Obligation (RO) which is currently the main mechanism for supporting large scale generation of renewable electricity (discussed further in Section 2.4.7).

2.2.3 The UK Government has identified that there will be significant change in our energy infrastructure over the coming years, primarily driven by the pressing need to respond to the challenges faced by climate change, to ensure security of energy supply and the need to maximise economic opportunities (DECC, 2011a). The following sections set out the need for this shift in energy generation in the context of an offshore wind energy generation project.

The Need for Renewable Energy

2.2.1 There are four key drivers for the shift in energy production to low carbon sources, including renewable energy, in the UK and these are discussed in the following sections:

1. The need to tackle climate change;
2. The need to secure energy supply;
3. The need for new energy infrastructure; and
4. The need to maximise economic opportunities.

1. The need to tackle climate change

- 2.2.2 The potential effects of climate change are well documented. A continuation of global emissions, including greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, at current levels could lead average global temperatures to rise by up to 6°C by the end of this century (IPCC, 2007). The implications of such predicted effects would be profound, with a rise in frequency in extreme weather events like floods and drought resulting in increased global instability, conflict, public health-related deaths and migration of people to levels beyond any recent experience (DECC, 2011a). Within the UK it is considered that heat waves, droughts, and floods would become more prevalent (DECC, 2011a).
- 2.2.3 It has been predicted that to minimise the worst effects of climate change, average global temperature rise would need to be kept to 2°C (DECC, 2011a). Based on scientific projections this means that greenhouse gas emissions would need to start reducing before 2020 (DECC, 2011a) and reduce by 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels (Lord Turner to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, 7th October 2008). Governments around the world have recognised this and policy has been implemented at international and national levels to attempt to address this issue (see Sections 2.3 and 2.4).
- 2.2.4 Climate change also poses a significant economic threat. The Stern Report (Stern, 2006) investigated the economic implications of not addressing this issue and concluded that with no action, the overall costs and risk of climate change will be equivalent to losing at least 5% of global gross domestic product (GDP) each year. Taking a wider range of risks and impacts into account, global GDP could be 20% lower than it might otherwise be (Stern, 2006).
- 2.2.5 Tackling climate change is therefore an imperative issue at both a humanitarian and economic level. Whilst it may no longer be possible to prevent climate change, it is possible to protect society and economies from its impacts to some extent, by providing better information, improved planning, more climate resilient crops and infrastructure (Stern, 2006).
- 2.2.6 The UK Government has made firm commitments towards ensuring that the UK meets its carbon reduction targets and to the growth of a low carbon economy that has renewable energy generation at its core. Offshore wind is expected to provide the largest single contribution towards 2020 renewable energy generation targets (DECC, 2011a). The international, national and regional policy drivers behind this change in energy generation to tackle climate change are discussed in detail in Sections 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5.

2. The need to secure energy supply

- 2.2.7 Indigenous energy production with the UK has fallen year on year since 1999 and, in 2004, the United Kingdom became a net importer, at a level of 4.5% of inland consumption. This increased to 26.7% in 2009, the highest level since 1976 (DECC, 2010a). This reliance has long been identified as an unsustainable energy model. It puts the UK at both financial and demand risk through increased global competition for resources combined with increased national growth and exacerbated by the loss of 25% of our existing electricity generating capacity by 2018 through scheduled power station closures (DECC, 2009a).
- 2.2.8 Without action the UK will become even more reliant on imported energy sources and would have greater exposure to global energy price fluctuations (DECC, 2009a). In 2009, the UK Government released the Low Carbon Transition Plan White Paper which plots how the UK will meet the 34% cut in emissions on 1990 levels by 2020. Within this White Paper it was identified that by decarbonising our electricity supplies we can greatly reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. Developing a low carbon energy sector for the longer term can deliver both increased energy security for the UK and ensure that it meets international targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (HM Government, 2009).

3. The need for new energy infrastructure

- 2.2.9 There are four key themes driving the requirement for new energy infrastructure within the UK:
- Currently three quarters of UK electricity comes from coal and gas. To meet climate change targets by 2050, virtually all electricity will need to come from zero carbon energy generation such as renewable sources, nuclear or fossil fuel (where they employ carbon capture and storage techniques) (DECC, 2009a);
 - There will be an increased emphasis on electricity as the source for supporting the heat and transport sectors. This could see the UK's demand for electricity in 2050 increasing to 50% higher than it is today, making it possible that electricity could account for half of the UK's overall energy use (DECC, 2009a);
 - As the UK moves to low carbon energy sources it is acknowledged that there will be a need for net additional electricity generating infrastructure to ensure adequate supplies because of changes in the nature and location of generating capacity. It is estimated that this will require about 43GW net of new capacity by 2020 and about 60GW by 2025 (DECC, 2011a); and
 - This rise in electricity demand will coincide with the scheduled closure of around sixteen power stations by 2018 representing approximately 25% (18GW) of our electricity generating capacity and also the decline of North Sea oil and gas reserves (DECC, 2010a and DECC, 2009a).

In the UK, at least 22GW of existing electricity generating capacity will need to be replaced in the coming years, particularly by 2020. This is as a result of tightening environmental regulation and ageing power stations.

2.2.10 The Low Carbon Transition Plan White Paper recognises that, in addressing the UK's energy challenges, there is a requirement for an unprecedented overhaul of the UK's energy sector, with significant amounts of new energy infrastructure needing to be built over the next 10-15 years (DECC, 2011a).

2.2.11 The 2010 Updated Energy and Emissions Projections (DECC, 2010b) indicates that by 2025 the UK might need around 113GW of total electricity capacity (compared to around 85GW now); of which, 59GW would come from new sources. This will require around 33GW from renewable sources, if renewable energy commitments are to be met, with the remaining 26GW determined by industry. Currently, 2GW of renewables and 8GW of non-renewable technologies are already under construction (DECC, 2011a).

4. The need to maximise economic opportunities

2.2.12 The energy industries in the UK play a central role in the economy and supporting a key commitment within the UK's Low Carbon Transition Plan to help make the UK a centre of green industry by supporting the development and use of clean technologies (DECC, 2009a).

2.2.13 The growth of a decarbonised energy sector can play a key role in supporting the economy. In 2009, the energy industries contributed 3.7% GDP and directly employed over 150,000 people (5% of industrial employment) (DECC, 2010a). In addition, the low carbon and environmental sector currently employs around 880,000 people and is worth £106 billion per year. It is estimated that employment levels could rise to more than a million people by 2020, if the UK is able to maximise the opportunity presented by being a world leader in low carbon technologies (DECC, 2009a). The offshore wind sector is seen as one of the key low carbon sectors in helping to secure this growth potential (DECC, 2009a).

Benefits of Offshore Wind Energy Generation

2.2.14 The UK is well suited for producing offshore wind and potentially has the largest offshore wind resource in the world, estimated to comprise over 33% of the total European potential offshore wind resource¹. The East of England in particular is ideal for offshore wind farms, with relatively shallow seas and sheltered wave conditions in comparison with many other regions (Renewables East, 2008).

¹ RenewableUK (formerly BWEA) <http://www.bwea.com/offshore/faqs.html#why>

- 2.2.15 Offshore wind farms have the potential to produce greater quantities of energy compared to onshore wind farms, as wind speeds are generally higher offshore than onshore and wind turbulence is lower. Wind turbine generators (WTG) can be larger offshore where there is more available space, less transportation constraints and less landscape and visual sensitivity than onshore.
- 2.2.16 The UK's first offshore WTG were commissioned in December 2000 off Blyth Harbour in Northumberland. The first major phase of offshore wind development in the UK, termed 'Round 1', established demonstration scale projects of up to 30 WTG, which amounted to approximately 1GW of projects in total. In 2003, The Crown Estate announced a second phase of development; 'Round 2', with fifteen projects awarded, amounting to approximately 7GW.
- 2.2.17 As a result of the Round 1 and 2 leasing programmes, the UK is the world's leader in terms of operational offshore wind energy, with 14 operational projects representing over 1GW of installed capacity, and almost 6GW of capacity within projects under construction and in the planning process (see **Table 2.1**).

Table 2.1 Current status of UK offshore wind farm projects

Offshore wind farm status	Number of projects	Electricity generation
Operational	14	1,524MW
Under construction	6	2,054MW
Consented	5	1,697MW
Submitted for consent	4	1,960MW

Source: RenewableUK, 2011

- 2.2.18 Despite this significant growth, substantially more offshore wind energy generation is required to help the UK meet its binding targets. In 2008, The Crown Estate announced proposals for Round 3, which had the ambitious target of achieving 25GW of installed offshore wind energy generation. Round 3 plans were followed by an announcement in 2009 of The Crown Estate's plan to offer extensions to certain Round 1 and 2 projects. The extension projects will directly contribute to the 2020 targets, help to secure the offshore wind supply chain and increase investor confidence in the market.
- 2.2.19 Overall, current plans for offshore wind could make a contribution of up to 40GW (including contributions from Scottish waters) to UK electricity generation capacity. This could amount to more than one third of UK electricity consumption.

- 2.2.20 Offshore wind energy generation is well placed to play a significant role in response to pressing climate change and energy targets. Offshore wind has lower lead-in times than nuclear energy plant and, compared to other forms of low carbon energy technology (such as carbon capture and storage, and other renewable technologies such as wave and tidal), is more mature, both from a technical and economic perspective.
- 2.2.21 The following sections outline the international, national and regional planning policies specific to renewable energy and offshore wind from international to national level. At a more regional and local level those policies of particular relevance to the GWF project are also summarised.

2.3 International Policy

- 2.3.1 The Kyoto Protocol (to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1997)) forms the highest level of international agreement on Climate Change across 189 States. In 2005 it set binding targets for 37 industrialised countries and the European community for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 5% against 1990 levels over the five-year period 2008-2012.
- 2.3.2 At a European level, Directive 2001/77/EC, on the “Promotion of Electricity Produced from Renewable Energy Sources in the Internal Electricity Market”, was adopted in September 2001. Among other measures, it requires under Article 3 that Member States take appropriate steps to encourage greater consumption of renewable electricity in conformity with national indicative targets. Member States were required to adopt and publish a report no later than October 2002 setting a national indicative target for future consumption of renewable electricity for the following 10 years and to review that target every five years. The Directive lays down an indicative target for the UK of 10.0% by 2010. This requirement has been satisfied by the 2007 Energy White Paper (meeting the energy challenge) confirming the UK’s commitments to renewable energy targets.
- 2.3.3 In January 2008 the European Commission published the 20 20 by 2020 package². This package proposed committing the EU to a 20% reduction in its greenhouse gas emissions and to achieving a target of deriving 20% of the EU’s final energy consumption from renewables sources by 2020.
- 2.3.4 In order to achieve the overall European Union (EU) renewable energy target of 20% the proposal included individual targets for each Member State (with the UK’s proposed target being 15%). In January 2008, the European Commission proposed binding legislation to implement the 20-20-20 targets. The ‘climate and energy package’ was agreed by the European Parliament and Council in December 2008 and became law in June 2009. The Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) also provides for Europe’s

² 20 20 by 2020: Europe’s climate change opportunity, COM(2008)30 final

Climate Change Opportunity, where the Commission set the emissions reduction target at 20% “rising to 30% if there is an international agreement”.

2.4 National Policy and Guidance

UK energy policy

2.4.1 UK renewable energy policy centres on a number of key drivers:

- The need to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions to tackle climate change caused by greenhouse gas emissions;
- The desire to secure national energy supply as part of a long-term sustainable energy policy; and
- The desire to promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and to improve our productivity.

2.4.2 There are a number of overarching UK environmental targets / goals which set the national policy framework for tackling climate change and renewable energy production:

- The UK’s agreed (legally binding) target under the Kyoto Protocol is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (comprising six gases, including carbon dioxide) by 12.5% compared to 1990 levels, averaged over the period 2008 to 2012;
- A Government objective of working towards the target of obtaining 10% of the UK’s electricity supply from renewable sources by 2010 with an extension of this target to 15% by 2015, with an aspiration that by 2020 the renewables share of the electricity supply will be increased to 20%. These goals are also part of the Climate Change Programme (2006) which was published by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the devolved administrations in 2006 and set out the policies and priorities for action in the UK and internationally;
- A UK goal to reduce CO₂ emissions (i.e. only one of the Kyoto greenhouse gases) by 20% below 1990 levels by 2010. This derives from a manifesto commitment in the 1997 General Election;
- A Government commitment (in 2009), under the EU Renewable Energy Directive, for the UK to ensure that 15% of all its energy, including heat and transport, comes from a renewable source by 2020; and
- The world’s first ever legally binding target (implemented through The Climate Change Act 2008) to cut emissions by 80% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels, with real progress by 2020, as laid down in the Energy White Paper in 2003.

- 2.4.3 The mechanism for the delivery of these targets is set out within two White Papers:
- The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan (DECC, 2009a); and
 - The Renewable Energy Strategy (DECC, 2009b).
- 2.4.4 The Low Carbon Transition Plan sets out the UK's first ever comprehensive low carbon transition plan to 2020, which is aimed at delivering emission cuts of 18% on 2008 levels by 2020 (and over a one third reduction on 1990 levels). One of the key steps identified within the Plan to achieve this is to ensure that 40% of the UK's electricity is sourced from low carbon sources by 2020 through a policy commitment to produce around 30% of the UK's electricity from renewables by 2020.
- 2.4.5 The Renewable Energy Strategy explains how and why the UK will achieve its renewable energy goals to ensure 15% of our energy comes from renewable sources by 2020, which is underpinned by four key policies:
- Put in place the mechanisms to provide financial support for renewable electricity and heat between now and 2020;
 - Drive delivery and clear away barriers in the supply chain and planning system;
 - Increase investment in emerging technologies and pursue new sources of supply; and
 - Create new opportunities for individuals, communities and business to harness renewable energy.
- 2.4.6 Of further relevance to the targets and commitments identified, the UK's Coalition Government (Conservative – Liberal Democrat), which came into power in May 2010 has indicated that it will seek to increase the target for energy from renewable sources, subject to the advice of the Climate Change Committee. Speaking on the timetable and deadlines for action on climate change, the Secretary of State delivered his third speech in July 2011. In it he pointed out that to avoid technically catastrophic levels of climate change, global emissions must peak by 2020 at the latest and that the world economy needs to have moved onto a low-carbon path by the middle of this decade. He said: *“This Parliament will end in 2015. If we have not achieved a global deal by then, we will struggle to peak emissions by 2020. It will be more expensive, more divisive, and more difficult. This is the last Parliament with a chance to avoid catastrophic climate change”*.

Renewables Obligation

- 2.4.7 The UK Government has implemented a number of support mechanisms over the years to help stimulate growth of the renewable energy industry with a view to meeting the targets described above. The principal fiscal incentive for renewable electricity projects in the UK is the Renewables Obligation (RO) scheme. Introduced in January 2000 (following consideration of what measures would be appropriate to ensure renewable sources contributed 10% of UK electricity supply by 2010), it places an obligation on UK suppliers of electricity to source an increasing proportion of their electricity from renewable sources.
- 2.4.8 The three respective RO for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are designed to incentivise renewable generation into the electricity generation market. The RO Order for England and Wales came into effect in April 2002. The Order places an obligation on licensed electricity suppliers to source an increasing proportion of electricity from renewable sources. Having started in 2003 at 3%, the RO for England and Wales is currently at 10.4% for 2010, and will rise to 15.4% by 2015. The Energy Act 2008 (which implements the legislative aspects of the Energy White Paper) included provision for the reform of the RO. Subsequent to this the Renewable Energy Strategy, published on 15 July 2009, sets out plans to expand and extend the RO with a view to enabling closer to 30% renewable electricity or more by 2020. This has been followed by The Renewables Obligation (Amendment) Order 2010, which guarantees in law the RO for accredited schemes until 2037; a clear indication of the UK's commitment to renewable energy generation into the future.
- 2.4.9 In July 2011, DECC published a White Paper on Electricity Market Reform (EMR) (Planning our electric future: a White Paper for secure, affordable and low-carbon electricity (DECC, 2011d)), along with a separate road map document, which sets out in detail how the UK plans to reach its 2020 renewable energy targets. The White Paper is expected to enable an increase in investment in low carbon power generation via a number of mechanisms; including changes to the RO. The renewable energy roadmap sets a target of building 18GW of offshore wind generating capacity by 2020.
- 2.4.10 The Electricity Market Reform (EMR) Project aims to develop and deliver a new market framework that will enable the cost effective delivery of secure supplies of low carbon energy. The EMR Project will overhaul the electricity market to help to promote investment in energy infrastructure, especially low-carbon generation and is a replacement mechanism for the RO. The White Paper highlights the importance of ensuring a smooth transition between the current and new market arrangements to allow investment to continue and states that “to ensure ongoing Renewables Obligation (RO) stability, existing accredited generation will continue to be supported under the RO” (DECC, 2011c, Executive Summary, page 12) . It is proposed that the RO will close to new accreditations on 31 March 2017 (DECC, 2011c, Executive Summary, page 13).

National Policy Statements

2.4.11 The Planning Act (2008) makes provision for the Government to produce National Policy Statements (NPS). These establish the national need for a particular type of major infrastructure, together with a series of criteria relating to the benefits and impacts of a development, which the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) will consider when making recommendations in relation to a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) application. The proposed abolition of the IPC as a result of new Government proposals is discussed in **Chapter 3 Legislative and Planning Context**. The aims of the NPS are to:

- Integrate environmental, social and economic objectives, including climate change commitments, for the delivery of sustainable development;
- Set out the national need for infrastructure development and set the policy framework for IPC decisions; and
- Provide a major step towards to the overall goal of speeding up the process of delivering infrastructure.

2.4.12 There are three NPS that are relevant for offshore wind and its associated onshore development:

- Overarching NPS for Energy (EN-1, July 2011) (DECC, 2011a);
- NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3, July 2011) (DECC, 2011b); and
- NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5, July 2011) (DECC, 2011c)

National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

2.4.13 The overarching NPS sets out the Government's policy for delivery of major energy infrastructure and is part of a suite of Energy NPS that were formally designated by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on 19th July 2011, having been debated and approved by the House of Commons the previous day. EN-1 is used with a further five technology-specific NPS by the IPC when it makes decisions or recommendations on applications for development consent for nationally significant energy infrastructure:

- fossil fuel electricity generation (EN-2);
- renewable electricity generation (both onshore and offshore) (EN-3);
- gas supply infrastructure and gas and oil pipelines (EN-4);
- the electricity transmission and distribution network (EN-5); and
- nuclear electricity generation (EN-6).

Paragraph 4.1.2 of EN-1 makes it clear that the IPC should start with a presumption in favour of granting consent for projects as long as the project is in accordance with EN-1 and the relevant technology specific NPSs, subject to certain exceptions, including where the adverse effects of a project outweigh its benefits.

2.4.14 The NPS sets out the Government's Energy and Climate Change Objectives for the Power Sector, these are summarised as follows:

- To help deliver the UK's climate change commitments;
- To ensure that investment provides security of energy supply through a diverse and reliable mix of fuels and low carbon technologies;
- To further ensure that investment delivers an electricity grid with greater capacity and the ability to manage larger fluctuations in supply and demand;
- To ensure cost effective energy generation to help eliminate fuel poverty; and
- To contribute to sustainable development by seeking energy infrastructure development that helps reduce climate change while also minimising negative impacts on the local environment (DECC, 2011a).

2.4.15 It is identified within the NPS that the Government recognises there is a significant need for new major energy infrastructure which will have to be met by projects progressing quickly, given that developments such as nuclear power stations have very long lead-in times (DECC, 2011a). Furthermore, it is recognised that around 30% of electricity generation will be from renewable sources by 2020, with a significant proportion of this sourced from onshore and offshore wind generation (DECC, 2011a).

2.4.16 The continued development of offshore wind within the UK is therefore seen as being of vital importance to help ensure the UK is able to meet its binding energy targets.

2.4.17 EN-1 gives specific advice in relation to the environmental assessment of the following specific issues which are relevant to all energy NSIPs:

- Air quality and emissions;
- Biodiversity and geological conservation;
- Civil and military aviation and defence interests;
- Coastal change;
- Dust, odour, artificial light, smoke, steam and insect infestation;
- Flood risk;

- Historic environment;
- Landscape and visual;
- Land use including open space, green infrastructure and Green Belt;
- Noise and vibration;
- Socio-economic;
- Traffic and transport;
- Waste management and
- Water quality and resources.

2.4.18 This advice has been followed in the preparation of this Environmental Statement (ES) and is considered in each relevant ES Chapter.

2.4.19 EN-1 also sets out government policy in relation to a variety of generic issues which may be relevant to particular projects. Those relevant to GWF include policies on nationally designated areas (including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and Marine Conservation Areas. The need to apply these policies has been taken into account in preparing this ES.

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)

2.4.20 As has already been noted, this NPS, taken together with EN-1, provides the primary basis for decisions by the IPC on applications it receives for renewable energy infrastructure. This covers any energy infrastructure for biomass and / or waste whose capacity exceeds 50MW, any offshore wind farm whose capacity exceeds 100MW, and any onshore wind farm whose capacity exceeds 50MW.

2.4.21 EN-3 gives specific advice in relation to the environmental assessment of the following issues which are specific to offshore wind projects:

- Biodiversity;
- Fish;
- Intertidal;
- Marine mammals;
- Birds;
- Subtidal;
- Commercial fisheries and fishing;
- Historic environment;
- Navigation and shipping;

- Oli, gas and other offshore infrastructure and activities;
- Physical environment; and
- Seascape and visual effects.

2.4.22 This advice has been followed in the preparation of this ES and is considered in each relevant ES Chapter.

2.4.23 EN-3 also sets out government policy in relation to a variety of issues which are specific to offshore wind projects, for example it is Government policy that wind farms should not be consented where they would pose unacceptable risks to navigational safety. The need to apply these policies has been taken into account in the preparation of this ES.

National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)

2.4.24 This NPS, together with EN-1, is the primary decision-making guidance document for the IPC on nationally significant electricity network infrastructure in England and Wales.

2.4.25 The following types of nationally significant infrastructure are covered by EN-5 (DECC, 2011c):

- Above ground electricity lines of 132kV and above; and
- Other infrastructure for electricity networks that is associated with a NSIP.

2.4.26 EN-5 states that *“when considering impacts for electricity networks infrastructure, all of the generic impacts covered in EN-1 are likely to be relevant, even if they only apply during one phase of the development such as construction or only apply to one part of the development such as a sub-station.”* However, the NPS also sets out additional technology-specific considerations on the following generic impacts considered in EN-1:

- Biodiversity and geological conservation;
- Landscape and visual; and
- Noise and vibration.

2.4.27 In addition, EN-5 sets out technology-specific considerations for Electromagnetic Fields (EMF), which is not an impact considered in EN-1. The advice given in EN-5 regarding environmental assessment has been taken into account in the relevant ES Chapters. The need to apply the policies relevant to new overhead lines and associated infrastructure has been taken into account in preparing this ES.

UK Marine Policy Statement

- 2.4.28 The UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS) applies to all UK waters and has been adopted by the UK Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Northern Ireland Executive. It will provide direction for new marine licensing and other authorisation systems in each UK Administration. The UK Government and Devolved Administrations jointly published the Marine Policy Statement on 18 March 2011.
- 2.4.29 The MPS is the framework for preparing Marine Plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment. It will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom marine area and has been prepared and adopted for the purposes of Section 44 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.
- 2.4.30 The MPS will, as part of the new marine management system:
- *“Promote sustainable economic development;*
 - *Enable the UK’s move towards a low-carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects;*
 - *Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and our heritage assets; and*
 - *Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues.”*
- 2.4.31 With regard to larger offshore renewable projects, the MPS states that *“where a relevant NPS has been designated, nationally significant infrastructure project applications must be decided in accordance with the NPS, subject to certain exceptions, and having regard to the MPS”* (paragraph 1.3.2). The MPS also emphasises the importance of renewable energy and recognises the importance of considering these projects in marine planning, stating that *“Contributing to securing the UK’s energy objectives, while protecting the environment, will be a priority for marine planning”* (paragraph 3.3.1)
- 2.4.32 The first Marine Plans are currently being prepared for the North Sea inshore and offshore areas. The areas extend from Flamborough Head in East Yorkshire, to Felixstowe in Suffolk, and 200km (124 miles) out to sea. Plans will be drawn up by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) over the next two years to co-ordinate the development of all marine activities. The current timetable for adoption of the first Plans will be April 2013, following a public consultation exercise.

2.5 Regional and Local Policy and Guidance

- 2.5.1 In addition to the new NPSs, consideration within this ES is also given to the Development Plan which covers the onshore aspects of the project. Throughout this ES relevant policies are identified to ensure that the issues they address are adequately considered in the environmental assessment of the project proposals. Paragraph 4.1.5 of EN-1 makes it clear that Development Plan policies may be regarded by the IPC as relevant and important in its decision making, but that where its policies conflict with an NPS, the NPS is to prevail. The performance of the project against the NPSs, Marine Policy Statement and the Development Plan is outside the scope of the ES. This is addressed in a separate Planning Statement.
- 2.5.2 The emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Development Framework (LDF) will set out the planning policies, proposals and actions for the future development of the district to 2027 and beyond and will replace the existing Local Plans. When complete the LDF will comprise a number of related documents, the most significant of these being the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies and Suffolk Waste Core Strategy which when adopted will replace the saved Structure Plan and Local Plan policies.
- 2.5.3 There are still a number of areas where certain policies from existing documents, such as the Structure Plan and the Local Plan, effectively remain in force as a result of some policies being 'saved' during this transition period. Those listed below are considered to be of relevance to GWF:
- The East of England Plan (East of England Regional Authority, 2008);
 - Suffolk Structure Plan (Suffolk County Council, 2001) - saved policies from May 2008;
 - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan - 2nd Alteration (Suffolk Coastal District Council, 2006) - saved policies from September 2007;
 - Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy (Suffolk Coastal District Council, 2010);
 - Suffolk County Local Transport Plan 2011-2031 (Suffolk County Council, 2011); and
 - Suffolk Coastal Climate Change Strategy (Suffolk Coastal District Council, 2009).

East of England Plan (East of England Regional Authority, 2008)

- 2.5.4 It is noted that the Government intends to abolish all Regional Spatial Strategies, including the East of England Plan, in the Localism Bill, and this intention is a material planning consideration to be taken into account for any development. However, the Bill has not yet been passed, therefore the plan remains valid.
- 2.5.5 The East of England Plan covers the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. Together with

relevant sections of the Milton Keynes, South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (2005) it constitutes the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England outlined from the East England Regional Assembly (EERA). The purpose of this document is to provide regional policy and a framework to enable economic growth and ensure there is a clear sustainable development framework with appropriate guidance within a regional context.

2.5.6 Section 2 of the plan outlines that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and other agencies should seek to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural, historic and built environment by positive management and protect it from development likely to cause harm;
- Adopt an approach that integrates protection and enhancement of nationally and internationally designated sites and areas while meeting the social and economic needs of local communities;
- Protect, for their own sake, all important aspects of the countryside, including individual features, special sites, their setting, and the wider landscape;
- Through the development plan system, conserve and enhance whenever possible regional and local distinctiveness and variety, based on a thorough assessment of local character and scrutiny of development impacts;
- Promote a sustainable approach to the use of the region's natural resources;
- Secure effective protection of the environment by considering the nature and location of proposed development as part of a broadly based concern for, and awareness of, biodiversity and other environmental assets, and of issues such as light and noise pollution;
- Restore damaged and lost environmental features whenever possible; and
- Adopt a common approach to environmental issues which cross local planning authority boundaries.

2.5.7 Within the East of England Plan there are a number of targets which are to be met for renewable energy generation which must be considered for GWF. In addition there are policies which are applicable to the onshore development. It is acknowledged that the regional planning system is in a state of flux. However, the courts have confirmed that adopted Regional Spatial Strategies are to attract substantial weight unless and until they are abolished, even after taking account of the intention to abolish (R. (on the application of Cala Homes (South) Ltd) v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2011] EWCA Civ 639).

- 2.5.8 The policies which are most relevant to the GWF project are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Policy ENG1: Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance (Section 9, page 62)

- 2.5.9 This policy states that local authorities should “*encourage the supply of energy from decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy sources*”
- 2.5.10 Under this policy, local authorities should ensure that development in the region contributes towards emissions targets through planning policies, which should encourage and promote the incorporation of suitable technologies and reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Policy ENG2: Renewable Energy Targets (Section 9, page 62)

- 2.5.11 This policy states that “*The development of new facilities for renewable power generation should be supported, with the aim that by 2010, 10% of the region’s energy and by 2020, 17% of the region’s energy should come from renewable sources.*”
- 2.5.12 These targets exclude energy from offshore wind and are subject to meeting European and International obligations to protect wildlife, including migratory birds, also being subject to revision and development through the Regional Spatial Strategy. Based on estimates of energy consumption this equates to the following targets for installed capacity:
- At least 1,192MW_e by 2010 (820MW_e excluding offshore wind); and
 - At least 4,250MW_e by 2020 (1,620MW_e excluding offshore wind).

- 2.5.13 However, sites greater than 12nm offshore cannot be considered under regional renewables targets and therefore fall under the UK’s overall target to combat climate change.

Policy ENV2: Landscape Conservation (Section 8, page 52)

- 2.5.14 This policy states that “*In their plans, policies, programmes and proposals planning authorities and other agencies should, in accordance with statutory requirements, afford the highest level of protection to the East of England’s nationally designated landscapes*”.
- 2.5.15 Planning authorities and other agencies are encouraged to recognise this by developing area-wide strategies and criteria based policies and securing mitigation measures where damage to local landscape is unavoidable.

Policy ENV3: Biodiversity and Earth Heritage (Section 8, page 55)

- 2.5.16 This policy states that “*In their plans, policies, programmes and proposals planning authorities and other agencies should ensure that internationally*

and nationally designated sites are given the strongest level of protection and that development does not have adverse effects on the integrity of sites of European or international importance for nature conservation.”

This policy describes the way in which planning authorities and other agencies should ensure that the region’s wider biodiversity, earth heritage and natural resources are protected and enriched. These include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring new development minimises damage to biodiversity and earth heritage resources by avoiding harm to local wildlife sites and, wherever possible, achieving net environmental gains;
- Identifying and safeguarding areas for habitat restoration and re-establishment; and
- Having regard to the need for habitats and species to adapt to climate change.

Policy ENV7: Quality of the Built Environment (Section 8, page 60)

- 2.5.17 Policy ENV7 emphasises that new development should *“be of high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration”*.
- 2.5.18 New developments should make efficient use of land, provide a mix of uses, promote resource efficiency, reduce pollution, maximise opportunities for the built heritage to contribute to regeneration, provide buildings of an appropriate scale and have regard to the needs and well being of all sectors of the community.

Suffolk Structure Plan (Suffolk County Council, 2001)

- 2.5.19 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the whole Suffolk Structure Plan 2001 ceased to be part of the Development Plan for Suffolk in 2007. A number of individual policies were ‘saved’ as from 27th September 2007 and apply until both the East of England Plan and the LDF are adopted. Although the former was adopted in May 2008, the latter is not yet adopted; a number of policies are, therefore, still in operation.
- 2.5.20 The saved policy T14 (Control of Development, Page 70 of the 2001 Suffolk Structure Plan) is of relevance to the onshore development for the GWF project. This policy reflects the emphasis in the plan objectives on access to development by means other than private transport and states that:
- “Major development will not be acceptable unless a comprehensive transport impact assessment has been completed which demonstrates how the proposed development both contributes to the objective of minimising the need to travel and encourages journeys to be made by modes other than the private car.”*

2.5.21 Policy T14 also outlines that any proposals creating significant volumes of traffic will only be acceptable where adverse effects on safety, traffic flow and the environment can be overcome. In addition, any developments which involve the movement of substantial volumes of bulk material must provide or have access to rail or waterborne handling facilities for the majority of the associated traffic.

Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (Suffolk Coastal District Council, 2006)

2.5.22 The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan sets out the Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land within the district and includes detailed policies to guide planning decisions. It consists of 263 specific planning policies (prefixed AP) which sum up key parts of the Local Plan.

2.5.23 The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan was adopted by the Council in 1994 and was subject to a First Alteration which was adopted in 2001. A Second Alteration came into effect on 31 March 2006.

2.5.24 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) established a new system of local development planning in England, replacing local plans with LDF. Suffolk Coastal District Council is in the process of replacing the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan with the new Suffolk Coastal LDF; some components of the LDF have been adopted as interim planning policy.

2.5.25 Policy AP98 Renewable Energy (Chapter 6 Paragraph 6.51) has the following policy of specific relevance to GWF: *“In view of the environmental benefits associated with harnessing renewable energy sources, the District Council will support the development of renewable energy schemes provided that it can be shown that such development would not cause significant harm to interests of acknowledged importance in the local environment.”*

2.5.26 In addition, a number of other policies are of broad relevance to the proposed development, these are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Local Plan policies of relevance to GWF project

Policy	Summarised description of policy
AP7 – Development of Archaeological Sites (Chapter 1, Paragraph 1.41)	In considering planning applications for development that might affect sites that are known or are likely to contain archaeological remains, the Council will require the following. (i) a field evaluation in those cases where the assessment suggests that important archaeological remains may exist but it is unable to be precise about their nature or extent.; (ii) the preservation of archaeological remains in situ where the assessment and/or field evaluation indicate that the remains are important.; (iii) adequate arrangements for “preservation by record”; and

Policy	Summarised description of policy
	(iv) a brief setting out the arrangements for recording remains
AP12 – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) <i>(Chapter 1, Paragraph 1.61)</i>	In order to safeguard the quality of the landscape within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, as shown on the Proposals Map, the District Council will not grant planning permission for any proposed development which would have a significant adverse impact on the landscape. Only proven national interest and lack of alternative sites can justify an exception.
AP14 – Wildlife and Habitats <i>(Chapter 1, Paragraph 1.65)</i>	Development will not be permitted if it could result in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the loss, or significant alteration of important habitats, including heathland, woodland, dunes, water meadows, other permanent pasture, parkland, marshes, salt marshes, vegetated shingle, mudflats, streams, ponds, reed beds, green lanes, trees and hedges; (ii) the threat to rare or vulnerable species, especially those protected by law (iii) the threat to species or habitats identified in National or Local Biodiversity Action Plans. Where development is permitted, the replacement or retention of important wildlife habitats will be sought through conditions or legal agreement.
AP19 – Design <i>(Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.7)</i>	Proposals which comprise poor design and layout or otherwise seriously detract from the character of their surroundings will not be permitted. In considering the design aspects of planning applications the District Council will have regard to Supplementary Planning Guidance which has been prepared and adopted and will generally resist proposals which do not conform to that Guidance
AP21 – Design in areas of high landscape value <i>(Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.10)</i>	In the AONB and Special Landscape Areas the form of buildings, choice of materials, and colours must be sympathetic to the general character of the area and seek to reduce visual impact. Any new developments within prominent locations in the AONB should use traditional materials for the entire structure. Care should be taken over the appearance of Agricultural buildings to minimise their impact within the landscape.

Policy	Summarised description of policy
AP122 – Sizewell Gap	The District Council will seek to improve and enhance the appearance of the Sizewell Gap area, as shown on the Proposals Map, for the benefit of residents and tourists.

Suffolk Coastal District Council Core Strategy (Suffolk Coastal District Council, 2010)

- 2.5.27 Suffolk Coastal's LDF Core Strategy and Development Management Policies were adopted as interim planning policy for determining planning applications and enforcement in March 2010. The Core Strategy is the first and pivotal part of the LDF, which sets out the Council's Key planning policies and objectives.
- 2.5.28 As interim policy, the Core Strategy, and the policies it contains, should be taken into account when considering planning applications. The Core Strategy sits alongside the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan, and the other documents, which form the Development Plan.
- 2.5.29 In light of the changes to the planning system which have been proposed by the Government, including the proposed abolition of regional targets for new homes (Regional Strategies), the interim Core Strategy document is currently being reviewed through a process of public consultation.
- 2.5.30 However, the majority of the policies have already received local support during their preparation; therefore the content of the core strategy, having been adopted as "interim Planning Policy" has been published so that it can be used in conjunction with relevant national policies in the determination of planning applications.
- 2.5.31 The Core Strategy sets out an "Overarching Vision of Suffolk Coastal in 2026" by outlining 15 Objectives under the following headings:
- Spatial and sustainability;
 - Housing;
 - The economy;
 - The environment; and
 - Community and well-being.
- 2.5.32 Under these Objectives are 18 Strategic Policies and 33 Development Management Policies, all of which have been put in place to achieve the vision and objectives set out in the Strategy.

Suffolk County Local Transport Plan (Suffolk County Council, 2011)

- 2.5.33 The Suffolk County Local Transport Plan covers the period 2011 to 2031. The Plan contains a number of objectives which have been developed to

support the Government's transport priorities including accessibility, congestion, safety and air quality.

- 2.5.34 The Plan includes a congestion strategy, which focuses on minimising the impact of traffic in market towns, villages and rural areas.

Suffolk Coastal Climate Change Strategy (Suffolk Coastal District Council, 2009)

- 2.5.35 Suffolk Coastal District Council has recognised the need to act to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels and cut emissions of greenhouse gases by producing its own Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2009/2011).
- 2.5.36 The strategy sets out policies and specific actions to help avert and adapt to climate change, with the aim to support work towards a sustainable future for the district.
- 2.5.37 This Climate Change Strategy includes targets and actions to be achieved in both the short and the medium term through three core objectives:
- Objective 1: Reduced carbon dioxide emissions (Section 12, Page 9);
 - Objective 2: Preparing for a changing climate (Section 13, Page 15); and
 - Objective 3: Reduced reliance on fossil fuels (Section 14, Page 16).
- 2.5.38 Of relevance to GWF, one of the actions under Objective 3 is “to utilise non fossil fuel dependent technologies where feasible in our own estate and operations and to promote these within our local communities.”
- 2.5.39 The Strategy also works alongside Suffolk’s Community Strategy³, which sets out the long term ambition and priorities for the wider county over the next twenty years. These strategies both set out plans with the aim to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide by 60% by 2025 (relative to 2005 levels).

2.6 Other Relevant Plans and Policies

Planning Policy Statements and Guidance

- 2.6.1 Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG), and their replacement Planning Policy Statements (PPS), are prepared by the Government after public consultation to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. In July 2011 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a consultation draft for a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out the Government’s economic, environmental and social planning policies for England in a radical streamlining intended to replace the existing system of Planning Policy

³ www.transformingsuffolk.co.uk

Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG). The NPPF, once adopted, will promote sustainable, economic growth and jobs, providing a framework for provision of infrastructure which underpins the economy, including progressive decarbonisation of the energy generation and distribution system.

- 2.6.2 Now that the NPSs have been designated, PPS and PPG (and the NPPF, when formally adopted) have no direct applicability to the consideration of applications for NSIPs. Paragraph 4.1.5 of EN-1 makes it clear that PPS and PPG have been taken into account in the preparation of the NPSs. There is specific consideration given in EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 to all of the relevant subject areas covered by PPSs and PPGs (flood risk, cultural heritage, national landscape designations etc) and it is only the policies in the NPSs which are to be considered. This is a fundamental change in approach to considering applications for NSIPs, compared to the position where the NPSs were only in draft. In this way, the regime under the Planning Act 2008 creates a completely separate national policy framework from the mainstream planning system.

United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan

- 2.6.3 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) is the UK Government's response to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) signed in 1992. The purpose of the UK BAP is to describe the UK's biological resources and provide a commitment to a detailed plan for the protection of these resources. The implementation of the UK BAP is the responsibility of several groups.
- 2.6.4 Three types of Action Plan have been developed, which set priorities for nationally and locally important habitats and wildlife. Each plan reports on a three to five year cycle.

Species Action Plans

- UK BAP Priority Species Action Plans – includes 1150 species, highlighted as priorities for conservation actions under the UK BAP. Contains information on the threats facing these species and actions to achieve the action plan targets;
- 'Grouped' Species Action Plans – Common policies, actions and targets for similar species, for example marine turtles or commercial fish. There are nine grouped action plans; and
- Species Statements – Overview of the status of species and broad policies developed to conserve them.

Habitat Action Plans

- UK BAP Priority Habitat Action Plans – Detailed descriptions for 65 habitats falling within the Broad Habitat classification and detailed actions and targets for conserving these habitats; and

- Broad Habitat Action Plans – Summary descriptions of 27 natural, semi-natural and urban habitats and the current issues affecting the habitat and broad policies to address them.

2.6.5 The UK BAP is relevant to GWF, as it advocates a “no net loss” of UK BAP species and habitats. Should a UK BAP species or habitat be impacted by the development, then appropriate steps will be required to ensure that adequate mitigation or compensation is provided.

Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan

2.6.6 The Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP) works on the basis of partnerships, to identify local priorities and to determine the contribution they can make to the delivery of the UK BAP. Suffolk has a range of habitats and species that are covered under the UK BAP and which form the SBAP. Any development must consider the potential impact from a national perspective on these locally found species, although it is worth noting that these species are not protected under the Habitats Directive. The project must take account of all UK BAP and SBAP species and habitats during all phases of the project’s life and ensure “no net loss” of species or habitats.

2.7 References

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