

## Consultation on draft National Policy Statements for Energy Infrastructure: English Heritage Response

### Chapter 2: Draft Overarching Energy NPS (EN-1)

1. *Do you think that the Government should formally approve ('designate') the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement*

No, not in its current form. Whilst English Heritage supports the general approach of the overarching Energy NPS, we feel that the designated Statement should either reflect the policies within *Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS 15) (if it is issued first) or should reflect the policies within PPG 15 and PPG 16 to ensure consistency between these key planning documents.

In addition, we have concerns regarding the lack of recognition for the principle of the historic landscape and the role design plays in mitigating impact on the historic environment.

2. *Does the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement provide the Infrastructure Planning Commission with the information it needs to reach a decision on whether or not to grant development consent?*

English Heritage considers that further work is required to ensure that the IPC is able to take sufficient account of the protection of the historic environment. The detail of that work is included in our response to question 5.

3. *Does the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement provide suitable information to the Infrastructure Planning Commission on the Government's energy and climate policy?*

[Nil response]

4. *Does the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement provide suitable direction to the Infrastructure Planning Commission on the need and urgency for new energy infrastructure?*

[Nil response]

5. *Do the assessment principles on the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement provide suitable direction to the Infrastructure Planning Commission to inform its decision-making?*

For ease of reference, we have subdivided our comments into the following sections – *General; Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment and section 4.23 (Historic Environment): Design; Landscape; and Miscellaneous.*

*General*

EN-1 will not, on its own, provide the IPC with the information necessary for it to make a decision. It will have to be used in conjunction with the relative technology-specific NPS, Local Authority Impact Reports and other relevant documents.

*Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment*  
Section 4.23 needs to be kept up to date with any changes to PPS 15. The text currently reflects the consultation draft but as a result of responses received, including our own, there may be significant changes in the final version of PPS 15. We expect to be involved in this process to ensure that both documents are consistent.

*Section 4.23 (Historic Environment)*

It is important that the relevant historic environment sections in each of the NPSs are consistent. At present there are differences between this section of EN-1 and the relevant section of the Ports NPS that should be reconciled. We urge DECC to work with colleagues at CLG and DfT to ensure consistency of approach and language. The comments below should be read in addition to this requirement for consistency.

Paragraph 4.23.4 lists categories of heritage assets. It would be helpful if the list was prefaced by the word 'includes' and not 'are' to remove any implication that the list is definitive.

4.23.6 states that "Impacts on heritage assets specific to the construction, operation, and/or decommissioning of specific types of infrastructure are included in the technology-specific NPSs". There are no sections within EN2, 4, 5 and 6 which cover impacts on the historic environment. Whilst there are very occasional references, consideration of the impact on the historic environment is not given adequate weight.

The Ports NPS refers to canals as part of the historic environment. For the sake of consistency, that reference should also be included in the elements of the historic environment included in 4.23.2.

Clarification that each application should include an Environmental Statement (as referenced in 4.23.7), with appropriate reference to the need to consider the implications for the historic environment, would be a helpful addition to this section.

4.23.9 should explain what is meant by "special circumstances".

Paragraphs 4.23.14 ("wider social, economic and environmental benefits") and 4.23.14 ("wider benefits") need to be cross referenced with PPS 15 to ensure consistency of language (see comments on the importance of consistency between planning documents).

English Heritage supports the inclusion of paragraph 4.23.18. However, we feel the principle needs to be made consistent with other energy NPSs. For example, the section on the elements used in consideration of nuclear

power station sites in the consultation document implies that mitigation by recording was used as a factor to enable consent to be granted (paragraph 356). This is clearly incorrect and inappropriate. Current government guidance in PPG 16 recommends preservation *in situ*, and that preservation by record should be regarded as a second best option (and the draft PPS 15 reflects this).

### *Design*

We would urge DECC to give further consideration to the important role appropriate design can have when considering the proposal's impact on the setting of heritage assets and ensure that this issue is better reflected in EN-1. Currently EN-1 (4.5.1) refers to PPS 1 (paragraphs 33-36). That rightly stresses the importance of environment (natural and built) being a consideration when assessing design. We suggest, given the scale of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, that EN-1 goes further than this and stresses the importance of mitigating impact on the historic significance of heritage assets through the design of proposals that will sit within their setting.

Currently the consideration of a proposed impact on the setting of listed buildings is a specific statutory consideration and the setting of all heritage assets is a material consideration in PPG 15 and PPG 16 (and is likely to remain so in PPS 15). We expect comparable obligations to be incorporated in the NPSs.

4.5.1 refers to 'Good Design', while 4.23.17 refers to 'high quality design'. The expected design standards should be consistent, and consistently defined.

### *Landscape*

The NPS includes a section on 'Landscape and Visual Impacts' (2.24). We feel that it does not properly acknowledge the historic element of the landscape. Most landscapes are historic in that they have been shaped by the interaction between humans and the landscape through time. Many of England's iconic landscapes have a historic significance, and their setting in a landscape is part of the significance of many heritage assets. The NPS should be worded to ensure the preservation of both designated nationally important landscapes and those of importance to local communities. This should accord with the European Landscape Convention, which came into force in the UK in March 2007.

Under 4.24.6 of EN-1, National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are listed as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. It states that 'each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes which help to ensure their continued protection and which the IPC should have regard to in its decisions.' Conservation of the cultural heritage is a core statutory purpose for National Parks, and for AONBs the statutory definition of 'natural beauty' in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 acknowledges the influence of cultural factors. It should be

acknowledged that part of the reason for a designation may be the heritage value of the landscape, and that, alongside natural beauty, this should be given weight by the IPC. We suggest adding '*and cultural heritage*' after '*natural beauty*' here. It will be necessary to include World Heritage Sites, Conservation Areas in the list of protected landscapes.

Section 4.9 *Grid Connection* outlines how in some cases, related applications (for example power stations and associated grid connections) might not be brought to the IPC at the same time. In such cases it may not be possible for English Heritage to identify the full impact on extensive or multiple heritage assets. Such situations should be avoided as far as possible.

#### *Miscellaneous*

Paragraph 4.19.18 introduces the principle of a time limit for implementation of the development consent. It will be helpful if the role of the time limit is made more consistently in EN-1 (as the overarching NPS) to ensure that implementation of the development is in accordance with the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to avoid any unanticipated impact on the historic environment.

6. *Does the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement appropriately cover the generic impacts of new energy infrastructure and potential options to mitigate those impacts?*

Please refer to our response to question 5.

7. *Do you have any comments on any aspect of the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement not covered by the previous questions?*

English Heritage is content with the approach of capturing key issues relating to the historic environment within a single section in EN-1, but that approach needs to be handled consistently, Landscape and Visualisation for example is included both in the Overarching NPS (EN-1), as well as EN-2 to EN-6. The implication of this approach is that these elements will be considered more important than those that are just covered in EN-1. Whilst we are sure that is not the intention, we feel the structure of the NPSs need to be consistent and clearer to avoid that happening.

In addition we remain unsure of how the IPC will handle the cumulative impact of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. This is covered to an extent in the current draft EN-6 (1.5.7), but we feel that this issue goes wider than simply the cumulative impact of nuclear power stations. We would stress the need for further information on how the IPC should consider cases differently if they relate to an area where multiple NSIPs are already in development or under consideration.

### **Chapter 3: Draft NPSs for Fossil Fuels, Renewables, Gas Supply and Gas and Oil Pipelines, and Electricity Networks (EN2-5)**

8. *Do you think that the Government should formally approve ('designate'):*

a) *The draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure (EN-2)?*

No, not in its current form. English Heritage considers that the current draft requires further work to ensure that that adequate protection is provided to the historic environment. Please see response to question 10a.

b) *The draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)?*

No, not in its current form. English Heritage considers that the current draft requires further work to ensure that that adequate protection is provided to the historic environment. Please see response to question 10b.

c) *The draft National Policy Statement for Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines (EN-4)?*

No, not in its current form. English Heritage considers that the current draft requires further work to ensure that that adequate protection is provided to the historic environment. Please see response to question 10c.

d) *The draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)?*

No, not in its current form. English Heritage considers that the current draft requires further work to ensure that that adequate protection is provided to the historic environment. Please see response to question 10d.

9. *Do the following National Policy Statements provide the Infrastructure Planning Commission with the information it needs to reach a decision on whether or not to grant development consent:*

a) *The draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure (EN-2)?*

English Heritage considers that further work is required to ensure that the IPC is able to take sufficient account of the protection of the historic

environment. The detail of that work is included in our response to question 10a.

*b) The draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)?*

English Heritage considers that further work is required to ensure that the IPC is able to take sufficient account of the protection of the historic environment. The detail of that work is included in our response to question 10b.

*c) The draft National Policy Statement for Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines (EN-4)?*

English Heritage considers that further work is required to ensure that the IPC is able to take sufficient account of the protection of the historic environment. The detail of that work is included in our response to question 10c.

*d) The draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)?*

English Heritage considers that further work is required to ensure that the IPC is able to take sufficient account of the protection of the historic environment. The detail of that work is included in our response to question 10d.

*10. Do the following draft National Policy Statements appropriately cover the impacts of the specific types of energy infrastructure covered in them, and potential options to mitigate those impact?*

*a) The draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure (EN-2)?*

Amendments are required to ensure that the historic environment receives adequate protection. 1.3.2 states that EN-2 does not repeat material set out in EN-1. However, there are sections which relate to adapting to climate change and the criteria for good design in both NPSs - please see our comments regarding consistency in EN-1.

1.3.3 refers to guidance being produced by CLG. We are seeking clarification on when that guidance will be issued and whether it will be consulted upon.

2.6.8 refers to the possibility of landscaping being used to limit visual impacts. However, such landscaping should not take place if the potential impacts on archaeological deposits outweigh any

impact on the visual impacts. This balance needs to be reflected in the text.

We welcome the inclusion of paragraph 2.8.4 – 5 and would recommend that they are included in other NPSs to ensure consistency of approach.

*b) The draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)?*

The current draft of EN-3 (2.7.16-19) directs the IPC to consider the temporary nature of wind farms (a period of 25 years is considered typical) when making decisions. 2.7.50 states that this time limited nature of wind farms should be a relevant consideration.

English Heritage considers that there are fundamental problems when making such considerations as they risk not taking proper account of the significant impact that such ‘temporary’ structures might have. It implies that any indirect impact on the historic environment (for example on the setting of heritage assets) will not be permanent. It is our view that the period of 25 years should not be classed as ‘temporary’. The implication of the current draft is that unacceptable impacts to the setting of the historic environment become acceptable if that impact only lasts for 25 years (the best part of a generation).

In addition, EN-3 also refers to application to re-power turbine arrays to extend the active life of a site. Once the necessary links to the national grid have been made, it is unlikely that such an application will be treated in the same way as wholly new application.

Therefore, we propose that DECC revisit the principle of the impacts of ‘temporary’ proposals to more accurately reflect the impact of structures which remain in place for a quarter of a century (with the possibility of extensions being made to that permission).

In addition to our concerns relating to the undue emphasis placed on the temporary nature of structures, we have a number of further comments:

1.3.2 states that EN-3 does not repeat material set out in EN-1. However, there are sections which relate to adapting to climate change and the criteria for good design in both NPSs - please see our comments regarding consistency in EN-1.

Appropriate safeguards need to be in place to ensure that decisions are not taken in isolation. Sites in Wales or Scotland could still have an impact on heritage assets in England, and vice versa.

Appropriate consultation is therefore required. For example, wind farms in Wales (as explained in 1.4.2) could have an impact on the settings of listed buildings on the north coast of Somerset and Devon.

Paragraphs 2.5.14 and 2.5.15 outline what waste/biomass plants will consist of. English Heritage considers that these elements could have a significant impact on the historic environment and so questions the logic of there being no section for historic environment impacts in section 2.5 (as there is in the sections for Offshore and Onshore wind farms).

Under paragraph 2.5.25, reference is made to applications incorporating access from the main highway network. The impact of a high level of heavy vehicle movement on the historic environment, especially structural and archaeological deposits, should be fully considered and the advice of English Heritage sought.

If the IPC will be considering applications with some details unknown (e.g. 2.5.28 and 2.6.43), then it should be able to refuse consent on the basis of insufficient detail, particularly if it includes, or is adjacent to, a heritage asset.

It will be important to ensure that paragraph 2.5.31, and in particular the conditions necessary for proposals which impact on designated heritage assets to receive consent, is consistent with the final PPS 15 (see also 2.6.56 and 2.7.32).

2.5.42 covers the height of any chimney stack (as part of a Biomass/Waste combustion plant). In addition to optimising the dispersion of emissions, consideration should also be given to the impact the stacks would have on the historic environment. This is partially covered in 2.5.49, but we would recommend this point was made more explicit.

2.6.81 – reference should also be made to the fact that elements of the historic environment could also be found in the inter-tidal area.

Paragraph 2.6.145 will need to be made consistent with PPS 15. As will the terminology (“cultural heritage”) in paragraph 2.6.145.

2.6.147 should be redrafted to be clear that proposals should aim to avoid all but ‘unavoidable damage’, and not just ‘unnecessary’. This will make this paragraph consistent.

The principle of *in situ* preservation is not only “International best practice”, but it is also enshrined in English planning policy and guidance (paragraphs 8 and 13 in PPG 16).



Paragraph 2.6.151, should provide more information on monitoring and enforcement conditions, and the role English Heritage, as a statutory advisor to Government, will have in this process

The impacts of soil disturbance mentioned in paragraph 2.7.43 should include the possible harm to archaeological remains.

*c) The draft National Policy Statement for Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines (EN-4)?*

1.3.2 states that EN-4 does not repeat material set out in EN-1. However, there are sections which relate to adapting to climate change and the criteria for good design in both NPSs - please see our comments regarding consistency in EN-1.

2.7.14-16, as currently drafted EN-4 makes no reference to the impact that dredging can have on underwater archaeological deposits. This needs to be amended to reflect the need to protect these resources and to agree appropriate mitigation measures. The prospect of disturbance to underwater archaeology also needs to be picked up in 2.7.21, with English Heritage included in the consultation process so that project planning includes historic environment analysis to inform delivery of any mitigation.

Paragraphs 2.9.18-19 cover the impact of gas and oil pipelines on landscape and views. They state that “Long term impacts upon the landscape for pipelines are likely to be negligible, as once operational the main infrastructure is usually buried”. This fails to cover the impact that such pipelines have on the historic landscape, and in particular any archaeological deposits. It is important that the impacts on the historic environment of pipelines are properly recognised.

*d) The draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)?*

1.3.2 states that EN-5 does not repeat material set out in EN-1. However, there are sections which relate to adapting to climate change and the criteria for good design in both NPSs - please see our comments regarding consistency in EN-1.

The Holford Rules, suggested for use in section 2.7 make no reference to the avoidance of historic landscapes or the avoidance of areas of archaeological interest (2.7.6). It is important that the protection of heritage assets is recognised here.

Following on from the comments made regarding landscape elsewhere in this document, under 2.7.10, we are unsure whether

the term 'environmental' refers to both the natural and historic environment. Clarification in the text is required.

Paragraph 2.7.12 should refer to applicants consulting with the relevant statutory consultees (such as English Heritage) as well as considering the three issues listed. Such consideration should be carried out in partnership as part of the pre-application stage.

11. *Do you have any comments on any aspects of the following draft National Policy Statements not covered in the previous questions:*

a) *The draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure (EN-2)?*

No.

b) *The draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)?*

No.

c) *The draft National Policy Statement for Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines (EN-4)?*

No.

d) *The draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)?*

No.

#### **Chapter 4: Appraisal of Sustainability and Habitats Regulations Assessment for EN1-5**

12. *Do you agree with the findings from the following Appraisal of Sustainability reports:*

a) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement (EN-1)?*

English Heritage does not agree with all of the findings of the Appraisal of Sustainability. Our concerns relate to issues that we have covered in our comments on the NPS. However, in addition to the concerns raised previously, we do feel that the consideration of the alternatives is unsound in parts. Against Option C, setting exclusionary criteria (page 13) it is concluded "it is for the IPC to assess the evidence presented on each project in terms of weighing the impacts it may have against the national need for new energy infrastructure". However, this logic

has not been extended to the nuclear NPS where locations have been specified (so that decision not being left to the IPC). The same logic extends to Option G and the decision to make non nuclear energy NPSs not location specific.

Table 5.1 lists the monitoring measures to be undertaken in order to assess the impact of EN-1. English Heritage would like to be involved in the monitoring the impact on the historic environment and the updating of the Statement in due course.

*b) Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure (EN-2)?*

English Heritage does not agree with all of the findings of the Appraisal of Sustainability. Our concerns mainly relate to issues that we have covered in our comments on the NPS. In addition, we would like to repeat concern over the conclusions reached in the Appraisal of Sustainability that “EN-2 in conjunction with EN-1 does not set out any specific additional requirements or identify any specific impacts relating to archaeology and cultural heritage”. We feel that given the prominent visual impacts, the substantial footprint of the sites, and the possibility of reusing old industrial sites there is a need for a specific section within EN-2 of Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure on the historic environment.

*c) Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)?*

English Heritage does not agree with all of the findings of the Appraisal of Sustainability. Our concerns relate to issues that we have covered in our comments on the NPS. In particular we repeat our concerns that the IPC are being advised to consider the “non permanent nature” of wind farms. Currently their “temporary nature” (usually 25 years) is being over-stressed.

*d) Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines (EN-4)?*

English Heritage does not agree with all of the findings of the Appraisal of Sustainability. Our concerns relate to issues that we have covered in our comments on the NPS. In addition, we would like to repeat concern over the conclusions reached in the Appraisal of Sustainability that “EN-4 in conjunction with EN-1 does not set out any specific additional requirements or identify any specific impacts relating to archaeology and cultural heritage”. We feel that given the nature of pipelines there

is a sufficient risk to underground archaeological resources to warrant additional consideration by the IPC.

- e) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)?*

English Heritage does not agree with all of the findings of the Appraisal of Sustainability. Our concerns relate to issues that we have covered in our comments on the NPS. In addition, we would like to repeat concern over the conclusions reached in the Appraisal of Sustainability that “EN-5 in conjunction with EN-1 does not set out any specific additional requirements or identify any specific impacts relating to archaeology and cultural heritage”. Pylons can have a considerable, impact on the setting of heritage assets – an issue that is not covered in the Landscape and Visual section, or in the Holford Rules quoted in that section. The Appraisal of Sustainability does not give Archaeological and Cultural Heritage the same level of analysis as it receives in each of the other Appraisals. Given the above, there is no reasonable justification for this.

13. *Do you think that any findings from the following Appraisal of Sustainability reports have not been taken into account of property in the relevant draft National Policy Statements:*

- a) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement (EN-1)?*

The Appraisal of Sustainability for EN-1 establishes the principle of the historic landscape and the possible impact that Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects might have within its guide questions (page 22, AoS Objective 10), yet this is not reflected in the NPS. In addition, on page 35 it states that the NPS should give “due regard to the highest level of protection (World Heritage Sites)”, yet this is not reflected in the NPS, as World Heritage Sites are given no additional protection to nationally designated sites. The NPS also highlights that not all elements of the World Heritage Site are of the same significance, whilst not providing sufficient emphasis on the international importance of the whole (4.23.15).

- b) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure (EN-2)?*
- c) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)?*
- d) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines (EN-4)?*

- e) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)?*

14. *Do you have any comments on any aspect of the following Appraisal of Sustainability reports not covered by the previous questions:*

- a) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement (EN-1)?*

It will be necessary to update the Overview of Baseline section (Annex F, paragraph 10.1.1) regarding the timetable of PPS 15.

- b) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure (EN-2)?*
- c) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)?*
- d) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines (EN-4)?*
- e) *Appraisal of Sustainability report for the draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)?*

15. *Do you have any comments on the Habitats Regulations Assessment reports for the following draft National Policy Statements:*

- a) *Habitats and Regulations Assessment report for the draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement (EN-1)?*
- b) *Habitats and Regulations Assessment report for the draft National Policy Statement for Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure (EN-2)?*
- c) *Habitats and Regulations Assessment report for the draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)?*
- d) *Habitats and Regulations Assessment report for the draft National Policy Statement for Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines (EN-4)?*
- e) *Habitats and Regulations Assessment report for the draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)?*

## **Chapter 5: Draft Nuclear NPS (EN-6 and associated documents)**

16. *Do you think that the Government should formally approve ('designate') the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement?*

No, not in its current form. English Heritage considers that the current draft requires further work to ensure that adequate protection is provided to the historic environment. Please see our response to question 20.

*17. Does the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement provide the Infrastructure Planning Commission with the information it need to reach a decision on whether or not to grant development consent?*

The Nuclear National Policy Statement needs to read in conjunction with the EN-1, Local Authority Impact Reports and other relevant documents to provide the IPC with sufficient information in order for it grant, or refuse consent.

*18. Does the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement provide suitable direction to the Infrastructure Planning Commission on the need and urgency for new nuclear power stations?*

No comments.

*19. Do you agree with the Government's preliminary conclusion that effective arrangements will exist to manage and dispose of the waste that will be produced by new nuclear power stations in the UK?*

No comments.

*20. Does the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement appropriately cover the impacts of new nuclear power stations and potential options to mitigate those impacts?*

No. Not in its current form.

Given the scale and proposed location of the nuclear sites, these NSIPs are likely to have specific impacts for the historic environment, which will include the existing nuclear power stations. Terrestrial and underwater factors will both have to be taken into account, particularly when deciding what conditions need to be placed within the Development Consent Order should this be granted. A section which covers the impact on the historic environment of a nuclear power station should be added to address these issues.

Section 3.5, outlines the role and importance of 'good design'. As mentioned in our comments on the other energy NPSs, this fails to recognise the importance of design in minimising the impact of new proposals on the historic environment.

We seek clarification on why paragraph 4.1.7 does not make reference to the historic environment as being a Nuclear Specific Impact (particularly as 'landscape and visual' are noted). This point links to those previously made regarding the inconsistent interpretation of 'impact'.

Under table 1, the SSA Criterion for 'Areas of amenity, cultural heritage and landscape value' states that impact is addressed through policy in EN-

1. However, EN-1 is not sufficient and this should be widened to include section 3.5 (Consideration of good design) and 4.6 (Nuclear Specific Impacts: Landscape and visual).

Section 4.6 (landscape and visual) does not properly capture the contribution the historic environment makes to landscapes (this links to those comments made on design in our comments on other energy NPSs).

Paragraph 4.6.8 makes the valid point of assessing cumulative effects. Whilst this is true with regard to nuclear power stations, the point should also be extended to associated infrastructure, e.g. electricity networks.

Under the assessments of nominated sites (section 5), and included within D8 of those assessments, reference is made to "...Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM), conservation areas, a registered park and garden and listed buildings, which may be of regional or national heritage significance" (5.12.60, but see also 5.15.68). Each of the examples of assets listed have been designated or registered as being of national or regional importance. Therefore "may be" should be replaced with "are".

In the final version of the Nuclear National Policy Statement we would expect the maps included to be of a significant higher quality than those included within the current draft, which are in many places illegible. They should also refer to the protected historic environment.

*21. Do you agree with the Government's preliminary conclusion on the potential suitability of sites nominated into the Strategic Siting Assessment, as set out below? You can respond in general terms on the assessment as a whole, or against one or more specific sites.*

*a) General comments*

Our comments on the suitability of each of the sites should be read in conjunction with those we have made in previous discussions with DECC in our role as a statutory adviser for the historic environment.

A number of the assessments in the NPS identify the possibility that impacts, particularly those relating to landscapes, could be mitigated. Mitigation, particularly if carried out through landscaping, can itself cause harm to heritage assets.

All assessments recognise that development of the sites will have adverse effects on the historic environment. Given the scale of the sites, the number of contributory factors which have led to the selection of the sites and the need established in the NPS we understand that impacts will be unavoidable. We are concerned however that the approach in each case is to take the decision on the site's suitability whilst also accepting that more detailed assessment is still necessary. In addition, it is left

to the proposer and the IPC to develop suitable mitigation (while recognising that not all impacts will be mitigated). Whilst it is recognised that some details must be left to the IPC and proposer to consider, given that the location will have been set, there is little the IPC will be able to do to ensure the necessary protection is in place. This approach is contrary to current and proposed government policy as expressed in PPG 15 and PPG 16, and the consultation draft of PPS 15 which identify mitigation as secondary to avoiding impact.

We remain unsure over how the IPC will view electricity network applications alongside those of the linked power generation (nuclear power station in this case). When assessing these sites, it is unclear how much consideration was given to the need to connect the power stations to the national grid. From the text within the NPS we are unsure of how these case will be treated, with some references to their separate nature (e.g. 5.14.74) and others of the need for them to be considered in partnership with network application (e.g. 5.13.86).

The maps included in the NPS to support the Strategic Siting Assessment are inadequate. They inadequately identify heritage assets.

*The Government considers the following sites to be potentially suitable for the deployment of new nuclear power stations by the end of 2025:*

*b) Bradwell*

The assessment concludes that as the Area of Sustainability found that “significant adverse effects on nationally designated landscapes are not anticipated” and that the site passed the relevant criteria. This assessment does not, however, refer to the likely effect on historic environment of the cumulative impact of the power station with other likely NSIPs (e.g. wind turbine developments). It is important that these cumulative effects are properly considered and therefore this should be included within ‘Guidance to the IPC’.

*c) Braystones*

5.7.97 incorrectly suggests that the IPC should consider applications “in conjunction with EN-6 which is the Electricity Networks NPS.” This reference should be to EN-5.

*d) Hartlepool*

*e) Heysham*

*f) Hinkley Point*



*g) Kirksanton*

*h) Oldbury*

*i) Sellafield*

5.13.86 records the Electricity Networks NPS as being EN-6.  
This is incorrect, it is EN-5.

*j) Sizewell*

*k) Wylfa*

*The Government does not consider the following sites to be potentially suitable for the deployment of new nuclear power stations by the end of 2025:*

*l) Dungeness*

*22. Do you agree with the Government's preliminary conclusion that the three sites identified in the Alternative Sites Study, as listed below, are not potentially suitable for the deployment of new nuclear power stations by the end of 2025? You can respond in general terms on the sites identified in the Study as a whole, or against one or more specific sites.*

*a) General comments*

No comments

*b) Druridge Bay*

No comments

*c) Kingsnorth*

No comments

*d) Owston Ferry*

No comments

*23. Do you agree with the findings from the Appraisal of Sustainability reports for the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement?*

Please see response to question 20.

*24. Do you think that any findings from the Appraisal of Sustainability reports for the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement have not been*

*taken into account of properly in the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement?*

No comments

*25. Do you have any comments on the Habitats Regulations Assessment reports for the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement?*

No comments

*26. Do you have any comments on any aspect of the draft Nuclear National Policy Statement or its associated documents not covered in the previous questions?*

No.

### **Chapter 6: Impact Assessments and other questions**

*27. Do you have any comments on the Impact Assessment report for the draft energy National Policy Statements?*

No comments

*28. Does this package of draft energy National Policy Statements provide a useful reference for those wishing to engage in the process for development consent for nationally significant energy infrastructure, particularly for applicants?*

The NPSs do provide helpful information for applicants, but only when read alongside the other guidance which has been developed by both government departments and the IPC itself. It would be helpful if there was a single point of reference for all relevant advice and guidance. It would be most appropriate if that were the IPC website.

*29. Do you have any comments on any aspect of the draft energy National Policy Statement or their associated documents not covered by the previous questions?*

No.

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