

Date: 02 June 2025
Our ref: 500060
Your ref: Homes Spaces Places Options and Preferences Consultation,
Tameside MBC



The Planning Policy Team
Tameside Council MBC

BY EMAIL ONLY

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Homes Spaces Places Options and Preference Consultation

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your consultation, which was received by Natural England on 14 April 2025.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

We have previously made comments on the Integrated Assessment Scoping Report associated to the Tameside Homes, Spaces, Places Options and Preference Draft Plan document under reference 443226 (dated 24 August 2023).

Natural England's statutory remit covers a wide range of natural environment issues and areas, and our advice is focused only on those areas which are relevant to our remit. For clarity, Natural England have reviewed the following documents as part of this consultation:

- Homes, Spaces, Places (HSP) Options and Preferences Draft Plan
- Policies Map
- HSP Integrated Assessment of Options and Preferences Draft Plan, April 2025
- Habitat Regulations Assessment, April 2025

Key Evidence

Natural England has not reviewed the plans listed. However, we advise that the following types of plans relating to the natural environment should be considered where applicable to the plan area:

- Green and Blue infrastructure strategies
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies
- Biodiversity plans and strategies
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- River basin management plans
- National Landscape and National Park management plans.
- Relevant landscape plans and strategies

Please see the attached Annex A for our advice on sources of local plan evidence on the natural environment.

HSP Integrated Assessment of Options and Preferences Draft Plan, April 2025

Natural England outline our comments on the above document below:

Table 1: The IA Framework

IA 16: Conserve and/or enhance landscape, townscape, heritage assets and their setting and the character of Tameside?

As part of the Assessment Criteria (Respect, maintain and strengthen local character and distinctiveness including the setting of the Peak District National Park, we suggest lighting and tranquillity are considered. Lighting can be harmful to wildlife and undermine enjoyment of the countryside or night sky, especially in intrinsically dark landscapes, such as protected landscapes and nature reserves. More information can be found within the [light pollution PPG](#).

4. Assessment of the Plan

We support the need to enhance scoring ratings associated to IA Objectives 1,3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 through safeguarding mechanisms proposed within wider policy that have cross theme issues such as designated sites, biodiversity assets, soils, peat, landscapes, water, green/blue infrastructure and connecting people with nature.

We also support the need for referencing specific enhancement or mitigation for the IA objectives. Natural England make the following comments:

IA Framework Objective 10: Improve air quality

We would expect the plan to address the impacts of air quality on the natural environment. It should address the traffic impacts associated with new development, particularly where this impacts on European sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

The effects on local roads in the vicinity of any proposed development on nearby designated nature conservation sites (including increased traffic, construction of new roads, and upgrading of existing roads), and the impacts on vulnerable sites from air quality effects on the wider road network in the area (a greater distance away from the development) can be assessed using traffic projections and the 200m distance criterion followed by local Air Quality modelling where required. We consider that the designated sites at risk from local impacts are those within 200m of a road with increased traffic which feature habitats that are vulnerable to nitrogen deposition/acidification. We strongly recommend that as part of the assessment process, employment site options will need to follow Natural England's approach to advising competent authorities on the assessment of road traffic emissions under the Habitats Regulations ([NEA001](#)). [APIS](#) provides a searchable database and information on pollutants and their impacts on habitats and species.

We recommend that consideration of traffic impacts to [Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#) is considered as a key sustainability issue. The Places for Everyone Policy JP-C8 Transport Requirements of New Developments states that planning applications which are required to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment will need to consider air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Any proposals that would result in increased traffic flows on the M62 past Holcroft Moss of more than 100 vehicles per day or 20 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) per day must devise a scheme-specific range of measures to reduce reliance on cars, reduce trip generation and promote ultra-low emission vehicles and provide a contribution towards restoration measures in accordance with the Holcroft Moss Habitat Mitigation Plan.

IA Framework Objective 11: Conserve and enhance biodiversity, green and blue infrastructure and geodiversity assets

We would like to see reference to supporting the delivery of the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Nature Recovery network, as outlined in the recently published NPPG section: [Natural environment - GOV.UK](#) [paragraphs 044-048]. LNRS can be used to inform the provision, retention and enhancement of biodiversity assets and Green Infrastructure.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a mandatory system of spatial strategies for nature established by the Environment Act 2021. They are designed as tools to encourage more coordinated practical and focused action and investment in nature. LNRS aims to help restore and connect habitats so that species can thrive; the process ensures local partners collaborate to agree the priorities for the best activities and land locations to inform local nature recovery. We recommend considering the priorities for nature recovery alongside the mapped and unmapped

actions set out in the draft GM LNRS Strategy as useful evidential information. More information on the GM LNRS can be found [here](#) and note that the finalised GM LNRS will be published later in 2025: [What does our draft plan for nature cover? - Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#).

IA Framework Objective 12: Ensure communities, developments and infrastructure are resilient to the effects of expected climate change

Climate change resilience has a relationship across the IA objectives. We advise that this section recognises acknowledgement of LNRS, Nature Recovery Network and wider biodiversity assets such as irreplaceable habitats, locally designated sites, priority habitats and species and protected species.

We highlight peat can play an important role in carbon storage and climate change resilience. However, when lost or degraded it can emit greenhouse gases. There is a large presence of peat within the catchment area as illustrated within the [England Peat Status Greenhouse Gas and Carbon \(GHG and C\)](#) which should be recognised as a key issue and opportunity in the assessment.

IA Framework Objective 13: Reduce the risk of flooding to people and property

Natural England advise there is a relationship with IA Objective 11. Key opportunities of the Local Plan include reduce flood risk by natural processes, green/blue infrastructure provisions and other nature-based solutions such as sustainable urban drainage systems and peatland management. Nature based solutions can perform a range of functions including improved flood risk management, provision of accessible green/blue space, climate change adaptation and biodiversity enhancement.

Monitoring the IA Framework

As set out in [Planning Practice Guidance](#), you should be monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementing the current local plan. This should include indicators for monitoring the effects of the plan on biodiversity (NPPF para 117).

The natural environment metrics in the baseline information are largely driven by factors other than the plan's performance. They are likely to be of little value in monitoring the performance of the Plan. It is important that any monitoring indicators relate to the effects of the plan itself, not wider changes. Bespoke indicators should be chosen relating to the outcomes of development management decisions.

Whilst it is not Natural England's role to prescribe what indicators should be adopted, the following indicators may be appropriate:

Biodiversity:

- Number of planning approvals that generated any adverse impacts on sites of acknowledged biodiversity importance
- Percentage of major developments generating overall biodiversity enhancement
- Hectares of biodiversity habitat delivered through strategic site allocations
- Hectares of peat lost to development/ hectares of peat in active restoration

Landscape:

- Amount of new development in AONB/National Park with commentary on likely impact

Green infrastructure:

- Percentage of the city's population having access to a natural greenspace within 400 metres of their home
- Length of greenways constructed
- Hectares of accessible open space per 1000 population

HSP Options and Preference Draft Plan

Natural England have reviewed the above document and outline our comments below:

4.0 Strategic Objectives

HSP Vision and Objective for the environment should include more specific goals for nature recovery and enhancement under the environment heading.

5.0 Spatial Framework

Natural England make the below comments on the following policy approaches:

HSP S1: Overall Spatial Strategy and HSP S2: Neighbourhood Spatial Policies

Cross-Theme Issues and Opportunities

Natural England advice that spatial framework policy approaches HSP S1: Overall Spatial Strategy, and HSP S2: Neighbourhood Spatial Policies have a cross-theme relationship to policy HSP E3: Biodiversity.

Brownfield Sites

Whilst Natural England support development on brownfield sites, some can be important for historic importance, wildlife and can be of high environmental value. Particularly invertebrate diversity. A starting point for assessing environmental value can be found at: [Open Mosaic Habitat \(Draft\) - data.gov.uk](#) which is a priority habitat.

Peat

Peatlands are England's largest terrestrial carbon store, containing hundreds or even thousands of tonnes of carbon per hectare. Their importance for climate change mitigation has been reviewed in detail by Natural England in Gregg et al, 2021: see [Carbon Storage and Sequestration by Habitat 2021 - NERR094](#). Excavating and draining peat leads to high emissions of greenhouse gases. Degraded state of peatlands has made them the largest source of emissions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere from land use in the UK, exceeding carbon uptake in forests. Natural England does not support development or extraction of deep restorable peat.

Green Infrastructure

We highlight that this policy should also include reference to incorporating nature and Green Infrastructure. (GI). Local design codes or guides should be used to support plan policies to deliver high quality development that responds to and enhances local character and distinctiveness, incorporating nature and GI.

We signpost the below resources:

- Natural England's [Green Infrastructure Framework](#) provides evidence-based advice and tools on how to design, deliver and manage green infrastructure (GI)
- Development should be designed to meet the [15 Green Infrastructure Principles](#)
- Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be delivered where appropriate. GI mapping resources are available [here](#) and [here](#). These can be used to help assess deficiencies in greenspace provision and identify priority locations for new GI provision

Natural England promote use of Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and best use of the associated [Greater Manchester Nature Network Map](#). LNRS considers opportunities to achieve wider nature-based solutions. The potential opportunities identified in these strategies can include actions to address other environmental objectives that are also positive for biodiversity; for example river flood management and climate change mitigation through tree planting and peatland restoration. Another ambition of LNRS is to try and align efforts for example to help direct the location of Green Infrastructure through Local Plans.

HSP E1: Renewable Energy Opportunities

Designated Sites

Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1), Special Protection Area (SPA) & South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC)/ Dark Peat Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) contain a diverse range of habitats which support a wide variety of bird populations and assemblages. Renewable energy opportunities should seek to avoid impacts on these designated sites. If sited inappropriately, there may be risk of displacement and disturbance. We advise reference to our SSSI IRZs [via the [SSSI Impact Risk Zones \(England\) \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)] to inform the need for further desk based assessment including habitat suitability assessment. Where evidence suggests a designated feature is present, further detailed bird surveys may be required.

Designated Landscapes

Eastern areas of the catchment may need to consider Peak District National Park. We signpost our Landscape Impact Risks Zones which can be accessed from the data.gov.uk website and [Magic Maps](#). This sets out a series of criteria whereby wind and solar projects require consultation from Natural England due to the potential for impacts to landscape designations.

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF highlights the need to protect and enhance valued landscapes through the planning system. Where the impacts of development are likely to be significant, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be provided with the proposal to inform decision making. We refer you to the [Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment \(GLVIA3\) - Landscape Institute](#) for further guidance.

Policy HSP E3: Biodiversity

Natural England recommend the policy approach considers the below issues and opportunities within planning policy wording:

Nature Recovery and Wildlife Connectivity

We would recommend an amendment to place further emphasis on nature recovery within the wording of this policy. It should recognise the potential of a connected network of wildlife-rich habitats to improve biodiversity. For instance, the protection and recovery of priority species and habitats and supporting habitats outside designated sites for protected species. Consideration should be given to wider benefits such as carbon capture, flood risk management and enhanced access to nature.

Priority Species and Habitats

The Plan should protect and enhance priority habitats and species. This should include appropriate protection and restoration of deep and shallow peatlands, found in fen and bog priority habitats that are valuable for biodiversity and as a carbon store. Other priority habitats include upland and lowland heathland, traditional orchards, meadows, woodlands and coastal habitats. Details can be found on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee [website](#) and on [MAGIC](#) maps (www.magic.defra.gov.uk)

Irreplaceable Habitats

Irreplaceable habitats (including ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees), should also be protected from loss or deterioration, and seek their enhancement wherever possible. Further advice can be found in Natural England's standing advice- [Ancient woodland and veteran trees: protecting them from development](#).

We highlight the Inspector's comments for Places for Everyone for consideration. Peat was recognised in the context of the England Peat Action Plan and NPPF 2021, Sections 14 and 15 relating to meeting the challenge of climate change and conserving & enhancing the natural environment. Deep peat that is capable of being restored with human intervention was stated as

meeting the NPPF definition due to its age and rarity. Natural England do not support development or extraction of deep restorable peat.

Designated Sites and Air Quality

You may wish to consider promoting the alignment to Places for Everyone, Policy JP-C8: Transport Requirements of New Development. Where planning applications require a Transport Assessment, this must be assessed to determine if there will be increased traffic flows on the M62 past Holcroft Moss of more than 100 vehicles per day or 20 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) due to impacts at Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC), specifically Holcroft Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). We advise that any planning application or allocated site which falls under this policy is accompanied by a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Protected Species

Natural England has produced [Standing Advice](#) to help local planning authorities assess the impact of particular developments on protected or priority species.

10. People

HSP PE1: Development and Healthier Environments, HSP PE 2: Accessible Green Space, and HSP PE4 Strategic Recreation and Countryside Access

Natural England advise there are opportunities in these policy approaches to acknowledge the intrinsic link between greater access to green and blue spaces and the improvement to physical and mental wellbeing, which can also bolster opportunities for biodiversity assets and designated sites.

HSP PE6: Peak District National Park

The Local Plan should give great weight to conserving and enhancing designated landscapes which include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and The Peak District National Park. Development should reflect their natural beauty and special qualities (as identified in their Management Plans). Policies should help in furthering the statutory purposes of designated landscapes. Policies can be informed by landscape character and sensitivity assessments.

Noting The Peak District National Park is situated on the boundary of the Local Plan catchment, the scale and extent of development should be limited in these areas. The Local Plan should consider both the direct and indirect impacts of development on the designated landscape and its setting. Policy should guide any development in these areas to meet the highest standards of design and environmental quality and seek opportunities to enhance the landscape and improve access to nature.

10. Places

HSP PL8: Landscape, Townscape and Urban Form

We recommend there should be a policy section to reduce light pollution. Lighting can be harmful to wildlife and undermine enjoyment of the countryside or night sky, especially in intrinsically dark landscapes, such as protected landscapes and nature reserves.

Where appropriate, the Local Plan should also identify areas of tranquillity and include policies to protect them

Additional Advice

Natural England provide advice on the below themes which we strongly encourage are included within the Local Plan:

Agricultural Land and Soils

Natural England notes that soil resources should be considered within the Local Plan beyond contaminated land. We advise the Local Plan should include a policy to protect Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a). Policies should avoid the loss of BMV land.

The Plan should recognise that development has an irreversible adverse impact on the finite national stock of BMV land. Any development proposed on BMV land should be informed by a

detailed soil survey.

The Local Plan should also have a specific policy for the wider protection of and sustainable management of soils on development sites. This should set out mitigation measures to minimise soil disturbance and retain as many ecosystem services as possible through careful soil management during the construction process and appropriate soil re-use. The Plan should recognise that development (soil sealing) has a major and usually irreversible adverse impact on soils. The impact of all types of development on soils should be considered.

Healthy soils are not only important for agriculture, but soils with high environmental value (e.g. wetland carbon stores such as peatland and low nutrient soils) are also important to ecological connectivity. Development should be supported by soils surveys and management plans - see Defra's [Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/Construction_Code_of_Practice_for_the_Sustainable_Use_of_Soils_on_Construction_Sites.pdf) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)).

We strongly support the consideration of deep peat within policy wording. Natural England do not support the principle of developing on peat and we do not support peat extraction.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact me at [REDACTED]. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Habitat Regulation Assessment

Natural England notes that your authority, as competent authority, has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment of the proposal in accordance with regulation 63 of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Natural England is a statutory consultee on the appropriate assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process. Your Appropriate Assessment concludes that your authority is able to ascertain that the plan will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of the sites in question.

Having considered the assessment, and the measures proposed to mitigate for all identified adverse effects that could potentially occur as a result of the proposal, Natural England advises that we concur with the assessment conclusions and would welcome further consultation on the HRA as the Local Plan progresses with any potential development allocations.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Whitaker
Sustainable Development Higher Officer
Cheshire to Lancashire Team
Natural England

	published by Natural England		
National Nature Reserves (England)	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/726484b0-d14e-44a3-9621-29e79fc47bfc/national-nature-reserves-england	✓ M
Country Parks	Local Planning Authorities	Natural England have mapped Country Parks using data from Local Planning Authority data https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/e729abb9-aa6c-42c5-baec-b6673e2b3a62/country-parks-england	✓ M
People and Nature Survey	Natural England	People and Nature Survey since 2019 https://people-and-nature-survey-defra.hub.arcgis.com/ Replaced the Monitoring Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey dashboard – replaced by The MENE survey dashboard https://defra.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=2f24d6c942d44e81821c3ed2d4ab2ada	
AIR QUALITY			
Nitrogen Decision Framework	Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)	A decision framework to attribute atmospheric nitrogen deposition as a threat to or cause of unfavourable habitat condition on protected sites JNCC Resource Hub	
Air Pollution Information System (Data on air pollution related to designated sites)	Various including Natural England	https://www.apis.ac.uk/ (data not downloadable)	✓
CLIMATE CHANGE			
'Climate Change Adaptation Manual' Second Edition 2020 (NE751)	Natural England	http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5679197848862720	
The National Biodiversity Climate Change Vulnerability Model	Natural England	Report: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5069081749225472#:~:text=The%20National%20Biodiversity%20Climate%20Change,be%20used%20(in%20conjunction%20with (data not downloadable)	✓ M
Species Risks and Opportunities Maps	Natural England	http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4674414199177216 (pdf maps, data not downloadable)	✓
DESIGNATED SITES			
Boundaries of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/5b632bd7-9838-4ef2-9101-ea9384421b0d/sites-of-special-scientific-interest-england	✓ M
Boundaries of Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/174f4e23-acb6-4305-9365-1e33c8d0e455/special-protection-areas-england	✓ M
Boundaries of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/a85e64d9-d0f1-4500-9080-b0e29b81fbc8/special-areas-of-conservation-england	✓ M

Boundaries of Ramsar Sites	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/67b4ef48-d0b2-4b6f-b659-4efa33469889/ramsar-england	✓ M
Boundaries of Marine Conservation Zones	Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (published by Natural England)	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/80c075c3-1880-44a0-bffc-69e20f307c21/marine-conservation-zones-england	✓ M
SSSI Impact Risk Zones	Natural England	Full details: https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::sssi-impact-risk-zones-england/about Data: https://data.gov.uk/dataset/5ae2af0c-1363-4d40-9d1a-e5a1381449f8/sssi-impact-risk-zones-england	✓ M
SSSI, SAC and Conservation Objectives	Natural England	SSSI: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/ SAC/SPA: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216	
SAC, SPA, Site Improvement Plans (SIPS)	Natural England	https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/	
Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites	Local Planning Authority and/or Local Environmental Records Centre and/or Local Wildlife Trust		
Potential Special Protection Areas	Natural England	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/f97c82ea-fe9a-4281-b9f6-08694a7d65b5/potential-special-protection-areas-england	✓ M
Possible Special Areas of Conservation	Natural England	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/be02be84-201e-4293-bf1f-0c2c296be5ad/possible-special-areas-of-conservation-england	✓ M
Existing HRA compensation sites	Local Planning Authority and Natural England		
Details and locations of existing strategic solutions	Local Planning Authority and Natural England		
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE			
Green Infrastructure Map	Natural England	https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Map.aspx National Green Infrastructure mapping database, with Links to data sources used in GI mapping: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4635531295326208	
Green Infrastructure Framework – Principles and Standards for	Natural England	https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx	

England, including Accessible Greenspace Standard (AGS) and Urban Greening Factor (UGF)			
Green Belt boundaries	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/ccb505e0-67a8-4ace-b294-19a3cbff4861/english-local-authority-green-belt-dataset	✓ M
Open Space Assessments	Local Planning Authority		
Urban Forestry	Forestry Commission	How to protect and manage the urban forest https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-protect-and-manage-the-urban-forest	
UK Ward Canopy Cover	Forestry Commission	Data set: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/43ca8e70-6cba-47a1-b3a8-c6b318862610/uk-ward-canopy-cover Viewer: https://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d8c253ab17e1412586d9774d1a09fa07	✓
HABITATS AND SPECIES			
Ancient Woodland	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/9461f463-c363-4309-ae77-fdcd7e9df7d3/ancient-woodland-england	✓ M
Ancient and Veteran Trees	The Ancient Tree Inventory Woodland Trust and Natural England	The Ancient Tree Inventory https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/ (data not downloadable)	✓
	Natural England	The wood pasture and parkland inventory https://data.gov.uk/dataset/bac6feb6-8222-4665-8abe-8774829ea623/wood-pasture-and-parkland-england	✓ M
Priority Habitat Inventories 41 habitats	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/4b6ddab7-6c0f-4407-946e-d6499f19fcde/priority-habitat-inventory-england https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=39403df11c8044d998772db5b54ad86c#overview	✓ M
Priority Habitat Creation and Restoration by the Environment Agency	Environment Agency	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/e0165747-8368-4ff7-a644-df9aeb27bb0b/priority-habitat-creation-and-restoration	✓
Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land Inventory (draft)	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/8509c11a-de20-42e8-9ce4-b47e0ba47481/open-mosaic-habitat-draft	✓ M
Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) and Local Geodiversity Action Plans (LGAPS)	Local Planning Authority		
Priority habitats and species as listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act, 2006 and UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP).	Local Environmental Record Centres		

National Forest Inventory on Trees and Woodland 2020	Forestry Commission	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/6e3126bd-fb2c-4cac-b2c4-d521f006b87a/national-forest-inventory-woodland-england-2020 (check for later releases)	✓ M
Local Nature Recovery Strategies (NB few are yet to be completed)	County Authorities / Responsible Authorities	Nature Recovery Network Evidence Handbook: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6105140258144256 Data viewer: https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7c5242fdec7f433aa4ee4510383e3909/page/Home/ (collection of data)	✓
HERITAGE and HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT			
National Heritage Register including scheduled monuments, listed buildings, Conservation Areas, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and protected wrecks	Historic England	https://opendata-historicengland.hub.arcgis.com/maps/historicengland::national-heritage-list-for-england-nhle/about and search on data.gov.uk (not all on magic.gov.uk)	✓ M
World Heritage Sites	Historic England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/3ac5c299-6805-476b-af9b-90aadec5e7b4/world-heritage-sites-gis-data	✓ M
National Historic Landscape Characterisation 250m and 500m grid	Natural England	500m grid: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/3fd13432-eee3-43d4-8bd0-e00a0bbc688f/national-historic-landscape-characterisation-500m-grid-england 250m grid: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/8b8c5df3-d7e3-484c-89d8-c7b819205002/national-historic-landscape-characterisation-250m-grid-england	✓ M
Heritage Coasts	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/79b3515f-b00e-419a-9c7e-1d3163555886/heritage-coasts	✓
Heritage Coast Management Plans	Local Planning Authority		
LANDSCAPE			
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty boundaries	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/8e3ae3b9-a827-47f1-b025-f08527a4e84e/areas-of-outstanding-natural-beauty-england	✓ M
National Park boundaries	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/334e1b27-e193-4ef5-b14e-696b58bb7e95/national-parks-england	✓ M
National Park and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) management plans	Conservation Boards/ AONB Partnerships and National Park Authorities		

Landscape National Character Areas (England)	Natural England	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/21104eeb-4a53-4e41-8ada-d2d442e416e0/national-character-areas-england https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/587130	✓M
All England Strategic Landscape Mapping Hub	Natural England	https://all-england-strategic-landscapes-mapping-hub-luc.hub.arcgis.com/ (not available for download)	✓.
Local landscape character assessments	Local Planning Authority		
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments	Local Planning Authority		
Landscape capacity and sensitivity assessments	Local Planning Authority		
Tranquillity and light pollution	Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)	https://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/ (not available for download)	✓.
MARINE / COAST			
MMO marine planning evidence base	Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evidence-and-the-marine-management-organisation-mmo	
MEDIN Marine Data Portal	The National Oceanography Centre	https://portal.medin.org.uk/portal/start.php	
Shoreline Management Plans	Environment Agency	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shoreline-management-plans-smpls	
Coastal erosion maps/ Coastal Change Management Area data/strategies	Environment Agency / Local Planning Authority	Information on CCMA: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6167783398440960	
NATURAL CAPITAL			
Natural Capital Atlases: Mapping and Mapping Indicators for County and City Regions (NECR318)	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/a9de8eaa-5424-40ac-b1b3-3e33e94e1648/natural-capital-county-atlas-mapping-england including link to full Evidence Catalogue http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6672365834731520	✓.
Nature Improvement Areas	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/a19c95e3-9657-457d-825e-3d2f3993b653/nature-improvement-areas	✓M
National Habitat Network (England)	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/0ef2ed26-2f04-4e0f-9493-ffbdbfaeb159/habitat-networks-england	✓M
Living England Habitat Map	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/e207e1b3-72e2-4b6a-8aec-0c7b8bb9998c/living-england-habitat-map-phase-4	✓M
Enabling a Natural Capital Approach	Defra	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/3930b9ca-26c3-489f-900f-6b9eec2602c6/enabling-a-natural-capital-approach	
Natural Capital Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA)	Natural England under development	In the long term, the NCEA will provide a comprehensive programme that will provide high quality (national and local) data to assess the state and condition of biodiversity, ecosystems, and natural capital assets in the terrestrial, aquatic & marine environment which will transform decision making for critical	

		environmental policies and interventions to meet the 25 Year Environment Plan https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-capital-and-ecosystem-assessment-programme/natural-capital-and-ecosystem-assessment-programme	
NET GAIN			
Biodiversity Net Gain guidance and metric	Defra and Natural England	Guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain Metric: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-metric-calculate-the-biodiversity-net-gain-of-a-project-or-development	
Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool (Beta Test Version)	Natural England	https://nepubprod.appspot.com/publication/6414097026646016	
SOILS and PEAT			
Provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Maps	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/952421ec-da63-4569-817d-4d6399df40a1/provisional-agricultural-land-classification-alc	✓ M
Strategic mapping assigning the likelihood of BMV agricultural land (created as a companion to the Provisional ALC maps)	Natural England	http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5208993007403008 (pdf only - data not downloadable)	
Detailed ALC reports – post 1988 ALC survey	Natural England	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/c002ceea-d650-4408-b302-939e9b88eb0b/agricultural-land-classification-alc-grades-post-1988-survey-polygons http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6249382855835648 (limited national coverage)	✓ M
Peaty Soil Location	Natural England	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/c9eb1cd9-c254-4128-a18d-d368fbe6acf0/peaty-soils-location	✓ M
England Peat Status Green House Gas and Carbon Storage	Natural England	https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/8ea9074e-bafc-4cc4-85dd-19cda1dfbfd5/england-peat-status-ghg-and-c-storage Report: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/30021?category=24011	✓ M
General mapped information on soil types, including peaty soils, is available as ‘Soilscapes’. This also includes a simple ecosystem services provision guide.	National Soil Resources Institute (NSRI)	https://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/ (not open data for free download)	✓ M
WATER			
Strategic Flood Risk Assessments	Local Planning Authority led		
Local Flood Risk Management Strategies	Lead Local Flood Authorities		

Water Resource Management Plans	Environment Agency / Water Authorities		
River Basin Management Plans	Environment Agency	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-basin-management-plans-updated-2022	
Catchment Flood Management Plans	Environment Agency	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/catchment-flood-management-plans	
Nutrient Impacts	Natural England Local Planning Authority	<p>A summary guide and frequently asked questions (NE776): https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6248597523005440</p> <p>Nutrient pollution: reducing the impact on protected sites - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Tools and resources for calculating nutrient neutrality. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/tools-and-resources-for-calculating-nutrient-neutrality</p> <p>Information on Nature Based Solutions as Nutrient Mitigation (NBS2024) https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6680815300509696</p>	

Annex B: Site Allocations General Advice

The strategy for allocating land for development should:

- avoid protected sites and apply the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy (NPPF 180a)
- give great weight to conserving and enhancing designated landscapes
- avoid the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

Selecting sites and setting design principles for their delivery should conserve and enhance the natural environment. This includes considering potential impacts and opportunities set out in the table above, as well as the issues set out in the table below secured through planning policy.

Evidence	<p>An appropriate evidence base should be used to support the selection of sites and inform the policies for their delivery. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, Landscape Sensitivity Assessments and Landscape Character Assessments. • Soil surveys and mapping (Agricultural Land Classification available on Magic maps) • ecological surveys, green infrastructure and biodiversity opportunity mapping.
Assessments	<p>Site selection must also be informed by the relevant environmental assessments. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment: it should be clear how this has informed and provided justification for the sites selected for allocation assessed against reasonable alternatives. Recommendations and findings from the assessments should also be used to inform mitigation measures and design principles for the allocated sites. • Habitats Regulations Assessment: mitigation and avoidance measures identified through the HRA should be secured through policies in the Plan. Where mitigation or avoidance is not possible the site should not be allocated.
Environmental requirements	<p>Plans should set requirements, opportunities and detailed design guidance for site allocations to conserve and enhance the natural environment. This should include measures secured through policy covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BNG: This could include specifying whether and what BNG should be delivered on-site given the scale of development anticipated, or if off-site provision will be required. Site allocations should be supported by a baseline assessment of biodiversity value for example using the latest version of Defra's Biodiversity Metric. • GI strategy: Allocations should set out measures to protect, enhance and improved connectivity of GI within and beyond allocation sites. Consideration should also be given to setting appropriate GI standards for allocation sites. • Landscape features: Allocation policy should incorporate and enhance existing landscape features within the development This could include hedgerows, walls, ancient and veteran trees, woodland and wildlife corridors.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agricultural land and soils: Allocations should be based on a detailed soils survey and have policies should secure a soil management plan.• Access: Policies for allocations should incorporate and enhance public access to the natural environment. This includes Public Rights of Way that run through or adjacent to allocated sites, as well as linking from the site to the wider route network. |
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