

Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2038



**Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation
Assessment Preliminary Screening
June 2024**

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Introduction

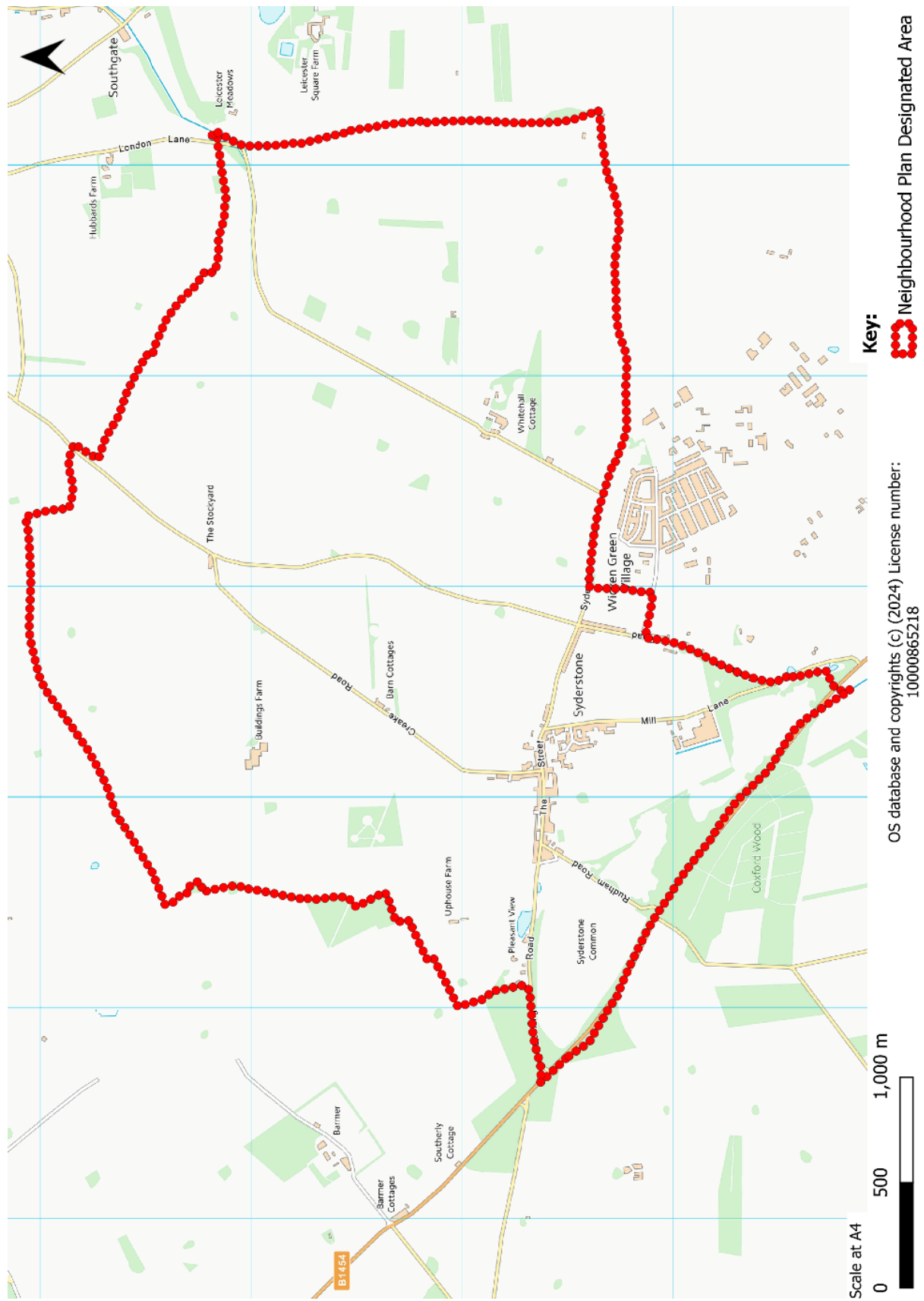
1. Syderstone Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Syderstone parish, known as SNP throughout this document. The planning period will be 2022-2038. The designated area (**See Figure 1**) is located within King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council area. [Collective Community Planning](#) has been appointed by the parish council to consider whether there is a need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken on SNP. This is required under European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive), transposed into UK law through the SEA Regulations¹.
2. SEA may be required for a Neighbourhood Plan if it is likely to have significant environmental effects. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is like an SEA but includes assessment of the likely significant effects of a plan or programme on economic and social factors, as well as environmental factors. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) clarifies that there is no legal requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to a SA, but that SA can be used to demonstrate how the plan will contribute to sustainable development.
3. This report will also determine whether or not the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive² and with Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017³. A HRA would be required when the implementation of the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan are likely to cause significant negative effects on a designated protected European Site (Natura 2000 sites).

¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633), as amended by the Environmental Assessment and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). It should be noted that the purpose of the amendments to the SEA Regulations is to ensure that the law functions correctly after the UK has left the European Union. No substantive changes are made to the way the SEA regime operates.

² [EUR-Lex - 31992L0043 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

³ [The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Figure 1: Designated Neighbourhood Area



SEA Screening

Scope of the Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan

4. A draft (Regulation 14) version of SNP is currently being prepared. It is intended that this is subject to public consultation in autumn 2024. SNP includes a vision for the long-term future of Syderstone, along with aims to support delivery of this vision. The current draft vision is:

The Syderstone retains its rural identity and ensures that any development coming forward in future years will strengthen the community by achieving a good balance of housing stock to meet local need, achieve high quality design whilst respecting our local character, strives to improve current local wildlife connectivity, will protect, and enhance our local environment including our natural, historical, and built assets such as trees, hedgerows, and community buildings.

5. The draft plan currently includes five specific aims to deliver this vision:
 - A. Ensure future housing development, including the tenure mix and size of bedrooms, meets the needs of the local population to help retain residents in the Syderstone.
 - B. Protect and enhance the local character of the Syderstone, ensuring that new development is of a high-quality design and sensitively located in line with local design codes.
 - C. Protect and enhance the Syderstone natural environment, its dark skies, green spaces, trees, and hedgerows that are important for wildlife.
 - D. Reduce the impact of flooding and ensure that surface water flood risk is not exacerbated by new development.
 - E. Protect community facilities that meet the needs of the resident population.
6. SNP will have a range of non-strategic planning policies to realise and deliver the above vision and aims. This includes policies:
 - To ensure the housing mix, including affordable housing, on new development sites meets local need;
 - To achieve high quality design with the input of Syderstone design codes/guide, that reinforces and complements local distinctiveness;
 - Protect the natural environment such as trees/hedgerows and green spaces and biodiversity by providing criteria for biodiversity net gain and established green corridors for habitat enhancement;
 - Tackling light pollution through an appropriate dark skies policy;
 - Ensuring proposals will have due regard to surface water flooding, the incorporation of SuDS and maximising biodiversity opportunities;
 - To protect the loss of community facilities for the vitality of the parish.

7. **The plan does not allocate land for development.**

Baseline Information

8. This section summarises baseline information for the SNP area, drawing on the Evidence Base which will accompany the Neighbourhood Plan.

Context

9. Syderstone is a village in Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough, with a resident population of around 430 according to the Census 2021. Syderstone is a small Norfolk village located approximately 7.7 miles to the west of Fakenham, 12.5 miles from Hunstanton, 15.5 miles from Kings Lynn, and 28 miles from Norwich. The parish also lies in close proximity to a multiplicity of other small villages, including Bircham Newton and Stanhoe, scattered among the rural landscape.
10. There are a few local services including the St Mary's Church, Allotments, Playing Field, Village Hall and the Bus Service. There are also a few local businesses within the parish which many are based at Syderstone Business Park along Mill Lane. This includes a number of trades within storage units such as motor services, timber services, self-storage facilities, kitchen furniture shop, plant, and machine hire.

Biodiversity, flora, and fauna

European Designations

11. There are no European statutory designated sites in the neighbourhood area, though there are a number of important European designations within approximately 20km to Syderstone. This includes:
 - **Dersingham Bog and Roydon Common**- Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar Site
 - **The Greater Wash and North Norfolk Coast** - Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar Site
 - **River Wensum**- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
12. **Dersingham Bog** is approximately 158ha in area size. It is a National Nature Reserve, and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is East Anglia's largest remaining example of a pure acid valley mire grading into dry heathland. The site includes extensive bog, wet heath, and transition communities over peat, fed by groundwater springs and seepage. In addition to its internationally important plant communities, the site supports important assemblages of birds and numerous nationally important invertebrate species. Human activities on site includes tourism, cutting of vegetation, and livestock grazing⁴.
13. **Roydon Common** is approximately 194ha in area size. It is a mixed valley mire exhibiting a classic sequence of vegetation types, linked to the varying hydrological

⁴ [Dersingham Bog | Ramsar Sites Information Service](#)

characteristics of the site and influenced by the nutrient quality of the water. Several vulnerable or nationally scarce plant and invertebrate species are supported. The site provides nesting habitat for *Caprimulgus europaeus*, winter roosting sites for raptors *Circus cyaneus* and *Falco columbarius*⁵.

14. The Annex I habitats that are a primary selection for Dersingham Bog and Roydon Common to be a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) include the Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* and the depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*⁶. The *Erica tetralix* vegetation community is part of a lowland mixed valley mire, a complex series of plant communities grading from wet acid heath through valley mire to calcareous fen. This gradation is of outstanding interest. The mire is extremely diverse and supports many rare plants, birds and insects, including the dragonfly *Sympetrum scoticum*, a northern species with a very local distribution in south-east England. Birds protected at European level occurring in the heathland at this site include European nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*, hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* and merlin *Falco columbarius*. Dersingham Bog represents **Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*** in eastern England. There are examples of this habitat type present in natural bog pools of patterned valley mire, in flushes on the margins of valley mire and locally in disturbed areas associated with trackways and paths in mire and wet heath. Mosaics containing this habitat type are important for bog orchid *Hammarbya paludosa*.

15. **The Greater Wash** this is the UK's largest estuary system which contains extensive saltmarshes. The intertidal flats of The Wash form one of the largest intertidal areas in Britain, supporting high concentrations of marine invertebrates which in turn provide a food source for over 300,000 wintering wildfowl⁷. The Wash has been given multiple statutory designations by Natural England because of its importance for wildlife and geology. These designations are:

- National nature reserve (NNR)
- Ramsar site
- Special area of conservation (SAC)
- Special protection area (SPA)
- Site of special scientific interest (SSSI)

16. The Special Area of Conservation designation recognises the importance of The Wash's coastal saltmarsh, sand and mudflats habitat for wildlife including Common Seals, breeding birds and wintering passage birds. Ramsar sites are wetland areas of international significance for waterfowl. The Wash area has Ramsar status in part due to the number of qualifying species of wildlife found in the area, in particular wintering passage and breeding birdlife. Natural England describes the whole area as being "of exceptional biological interest", hence its multiple designations. They describe the intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes as one of Britain's most important winter-feeding areas for waders and wildfowl outside of the breeding season. The saltmarsh and

⁵ [Roydon Common | Ramsar Sites Information Service](#)

⁶ [Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog - Special Areas of Conservation \(jncc.gov.uk\)](#)

⁷ JNCC Ramsar Information Sheet UK11072 [untitled \(jncc.gov.uk\)](#) – accessed 01/12/2021

shingle habitats are of considerable botanical interest and the Wash is also significant as a breeding ground for Common Seals. This designation sits to the north of the plan area.

17. **The North Norfolk Coast** has multiple designations including UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Special Protection Area EC Directive; Nature Reserve, SSSI, National Landscape and Heritage Coast. The area size spans over 7,887ha and it is a stretch of coastline consisting of shingle beaches, dunes, saltmarsh, intertidal mud and sand flats, brackish lagoons, reedbeds, and grazing marshes. The site supports nationally and internationally important numbers of various species of breeding or wintering waterbirds. It also includes several important botanical areas and is a centre for tourism and general recreation; a visitors' centre, trails and hides are available⁸.

18. **The River Wensum is an area size of 306.79ha.** The Annex I habitat that is a primary selection for the River Wensum to be a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) include the **water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation**⁹. The Wensum represents sub-type 1 in lowland eastern England. Although the river is extensively regulated by weirs, *Ranunculus* vegetation occurs sporadically throughout much of the river's length. Stream water-crowfoot *R. penicillatus* ssp. *pseudofluitans* is the dominant *Ranunculus* species but thread-leaved water-crowfoot *R. trichophyllus* and fan-leaved water-crowfoot *R. circinatus* also occur. The general site character is:

- Inland water bodies (Standing water, Running water) (42%)
- Bogs, Marshes, Water fringed vegetation, Fens (12%)
- Humid grassland, Mesophile grassland (40%)
- Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (6%)

National and Local Designations

19. There is one Natural England statutory designated site in the neighbourhood area, Syderstone Common- Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) (**Figure 2**). This sits to the south of the village between Rudham Road and Mill Lane. According to Natural England this SSSI was designated in 1984 due to biological interest and is a total size of 43.74ha¹⁰. There are currently no pressures on the site and 100% of the site area is considered to be unfavourable recovering which means "*units/features are not yet fully conserved, but all the necessary management mechanisms are in place. At least one of the designated feature(s) mandatory attributes are not meeting their targets (as set out in the site specific FCT). Provided that the recovery work is sustained, the unit/feature will reach favourable condition in time*"¹¹.

⁸ [North Norfolk Coast | Ramsar Sites Information Service](#)

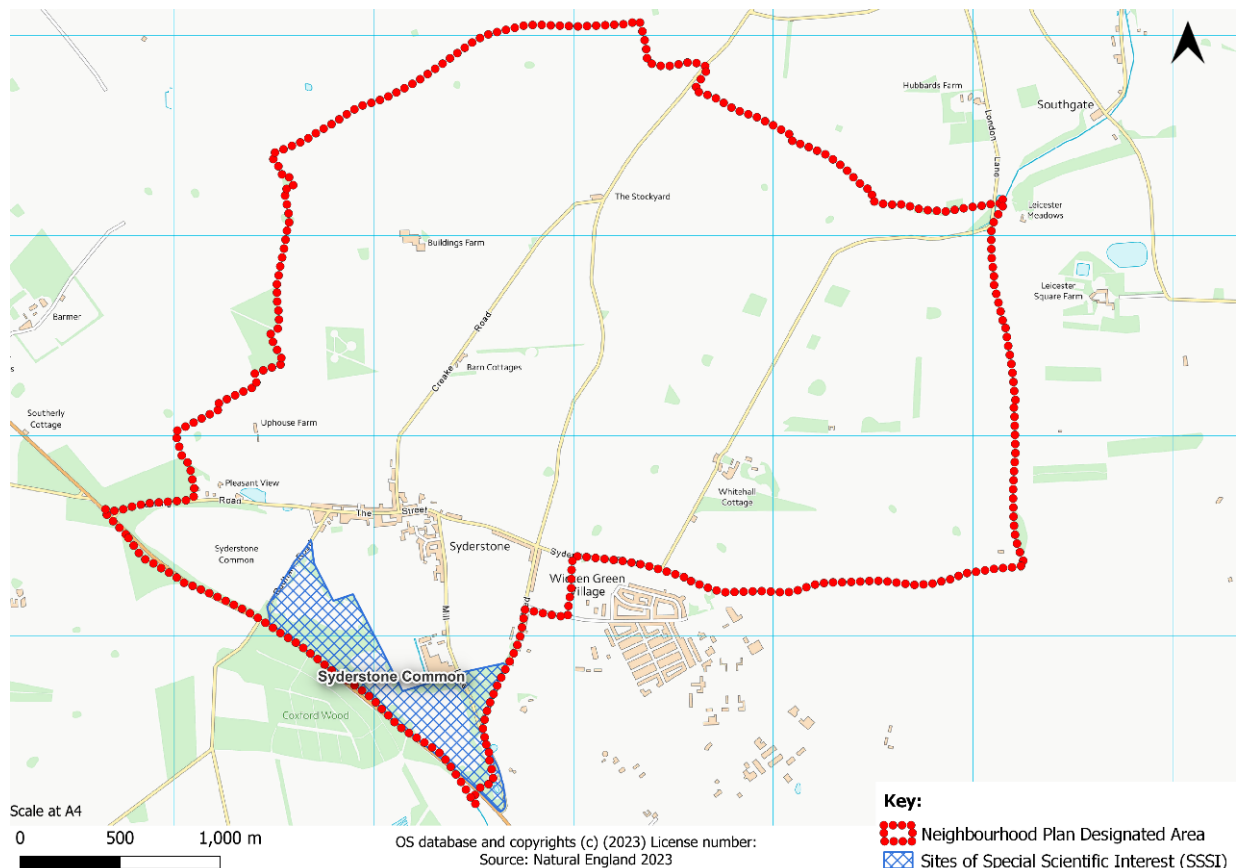
⁹ [River Wensum - Special Areas of Conservation \(jncc.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁰ [SSSI detail \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#)

¹¹ [Glossary \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#)

20. As stated on the Norfolk Wildlife Trust website, a number of species have been recorded including the Natterjack toad, Woodlark, Whitethroat and other notable breeding birds, reptiles, and amphibians. It is an area of grass heath punctuated with ephemeral ponds and secondary woodland¹². One of the restricted byways crosses through Syderstone Common which will bring recreational attraction and potential pressures.

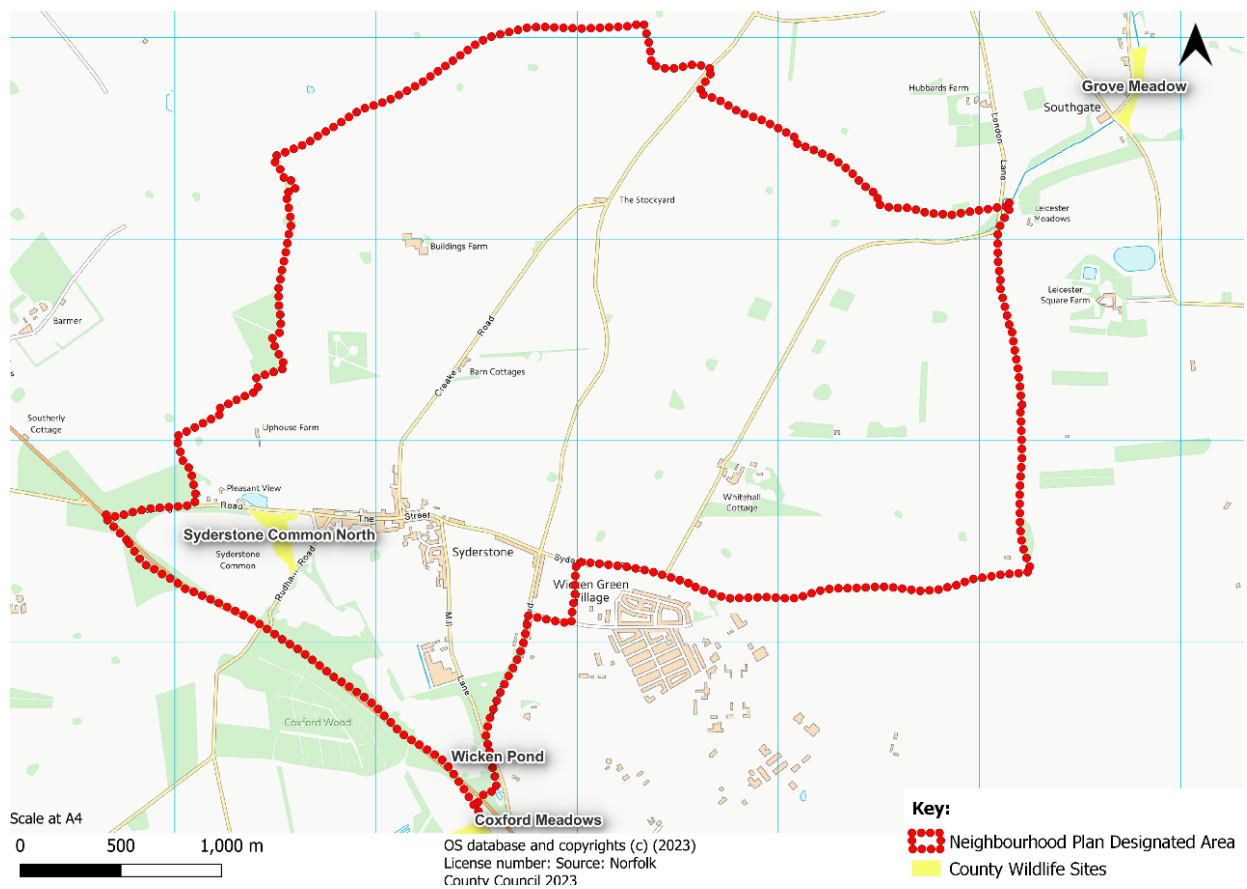
Figure 2- Wildlife Designations (Source: Natural England, 2023)



21. There is one County Wildlife Site that falls within the neighbourhood area to the south-west called Syderstone Common North (CWS 591) shown in **Figure 3**. As well as this there are three County Wildlife Sites adjacent or in close proximity including Wicken Pond, Coxford Meadows and Grove Meadow. These wildlife sites are not designated on a statutory basis, though they do receive a degree of protection through the planning process and are often recognised in district local plans. In this context, site protection relies on the commitment of local authorities and public bodies.

¹² [Syderstone Common - Norfolk Wildlife Trust](#)

Figure 3- County Wildlife Site within the parish (Source: Natural England, 2023)



22. The neighbourhood area, particularly to the south and east, contains priority habitat also known as Habitats of Principle Importance for biodiversity conservation. These are habitats which are most threatened, in greatest decline, or where the UK holds a significant proportion of the world’s total population. There are six main types of priority habitat in the parish (see **Figure 4**) coastal and floodplain grazing marsh; deciduous woodland; lowland heathland; lowland meadows and traditional orchard. There are also a few sites which are identified as no main habitat but additional habitats present. Not all of these will be protected under national designation, though they can be sensitive to development and should be considered when growth is being planned to avoid negative impacts.

23. As shown in **Figure 5** parts of the parish contain network enhancement zones. These habitat networks are within relatively close proximity of areas that are suitable for habitat creation. These areas could be used to connect and link up networks across the landscape¹³. Local authorities have a duty to consider the conservation of these habitats, and development that would adversely affect these would not normally be acceptable.

¹³ [Habitat Networks \(England\) - data.gov.uk](https://data.gov.uk)

Figure 4- Priority Habitats (Source: Natural England, 2023)

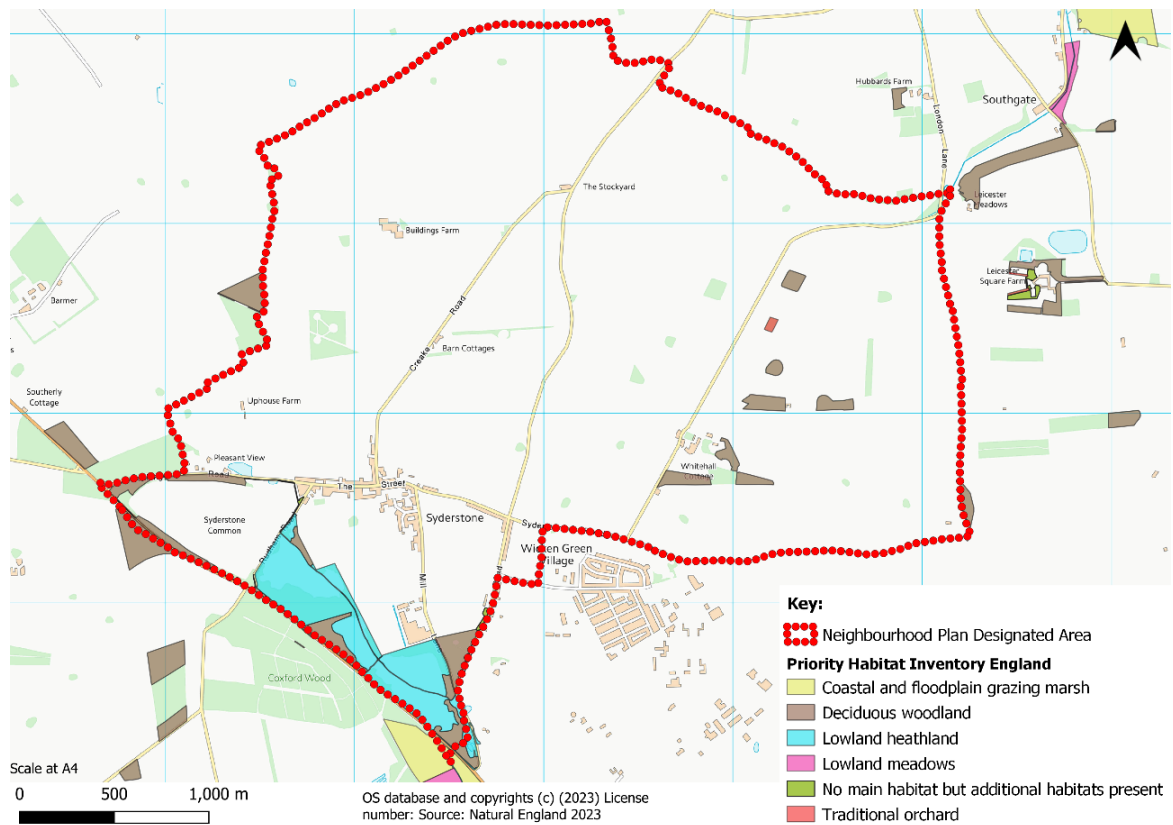
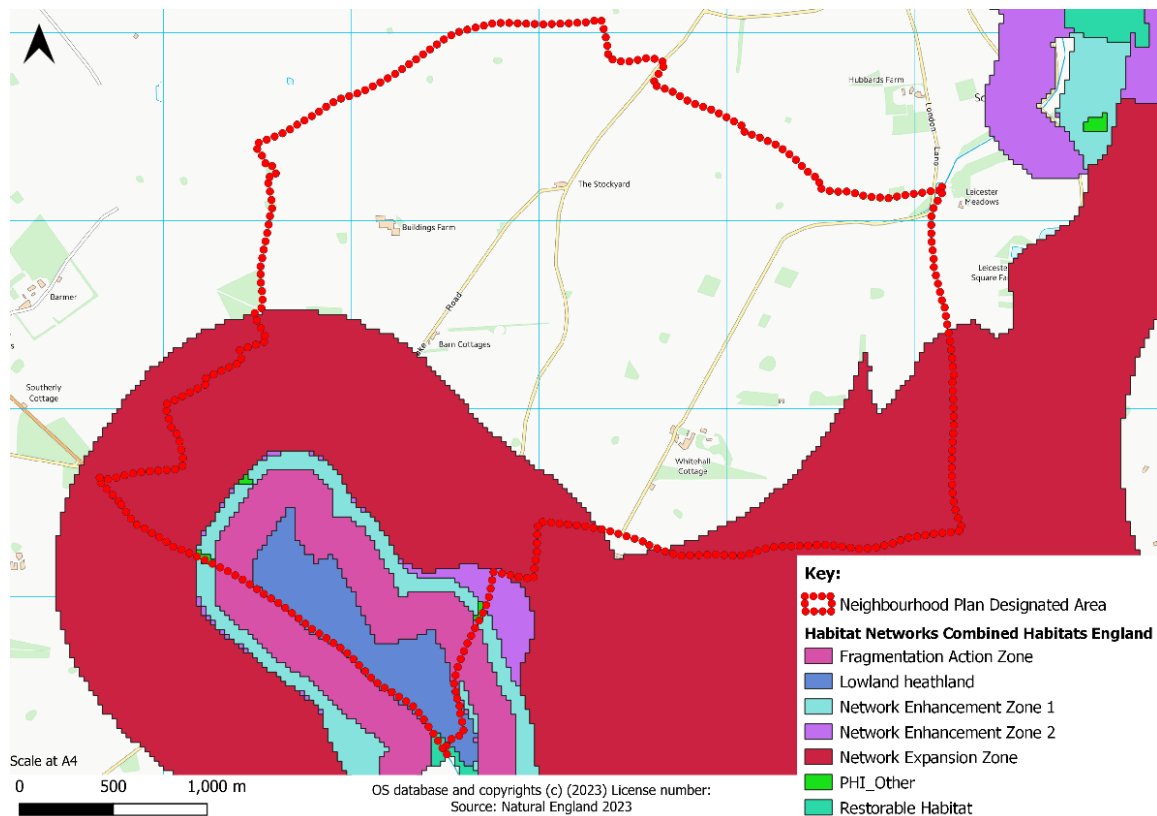


Figure 5- Habitat Networks (Source: Natural England, 2023)

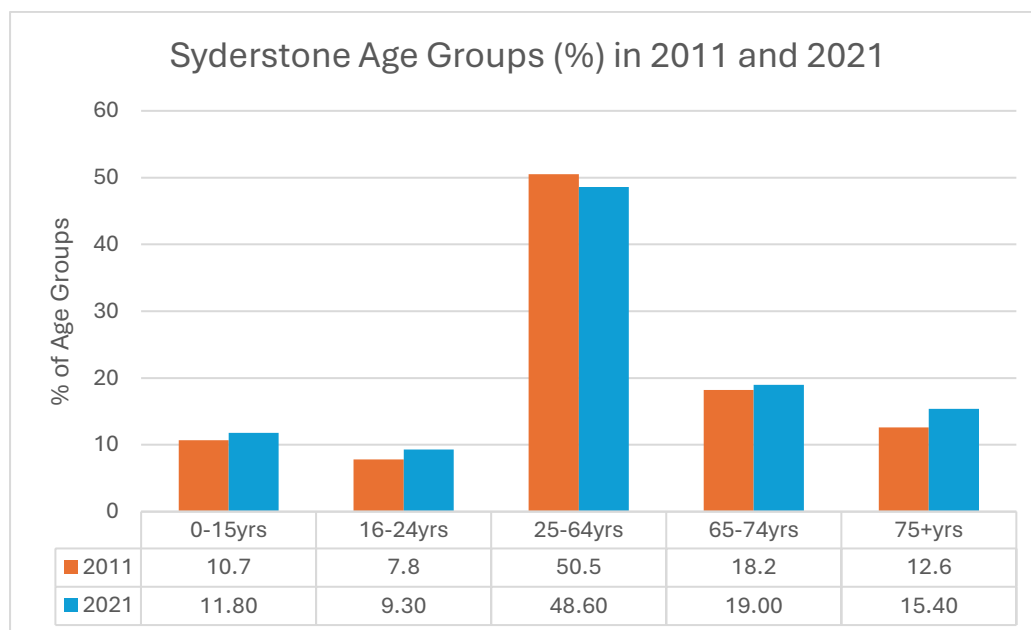


Population and Human Health

24. The total resident population of Syderstone is 430 according to the Census 2021¹⁴ compared to 445 in 2011¹⁵, showing little change. The parish is small in comparison to the 154,300 people residing in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk and 56,490,000 in England. In 2011, the census data shows that the ratio of females and males was nearly a 50:50 split with males making up 51.9% of the parish and females 48.1%. According to census data a high proportion of the population is of working age. In 2011, the mean age was 49.8 years old, and the median was 53.

25. As shown in **Figure 6** the age profile of the population has remained fairly static over the last ten years. There has been a slight decline in the 25-64 category and increase in other age groups. Interestingly for a rural area the amount of younger people (0-24yrs) makes up around 21% of the parish according to the Census 2021 data. The data also shows there has been a rise in older age groups (65+yrs) and if current residents choose to stay in the parish for a further 10 years the population will age further.

Figure 6-Syderstone Age Groups 2011 and 2021 (Census 2011;2021)



26. Provision of age-related services could become a consideration for the neighbourhood plan area over time as the proportion of over 65s makes up 34.4% of the parish profile.

Air and Climatic Factors

¹⁴ Census 2021. Population. Source: [Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS](#)

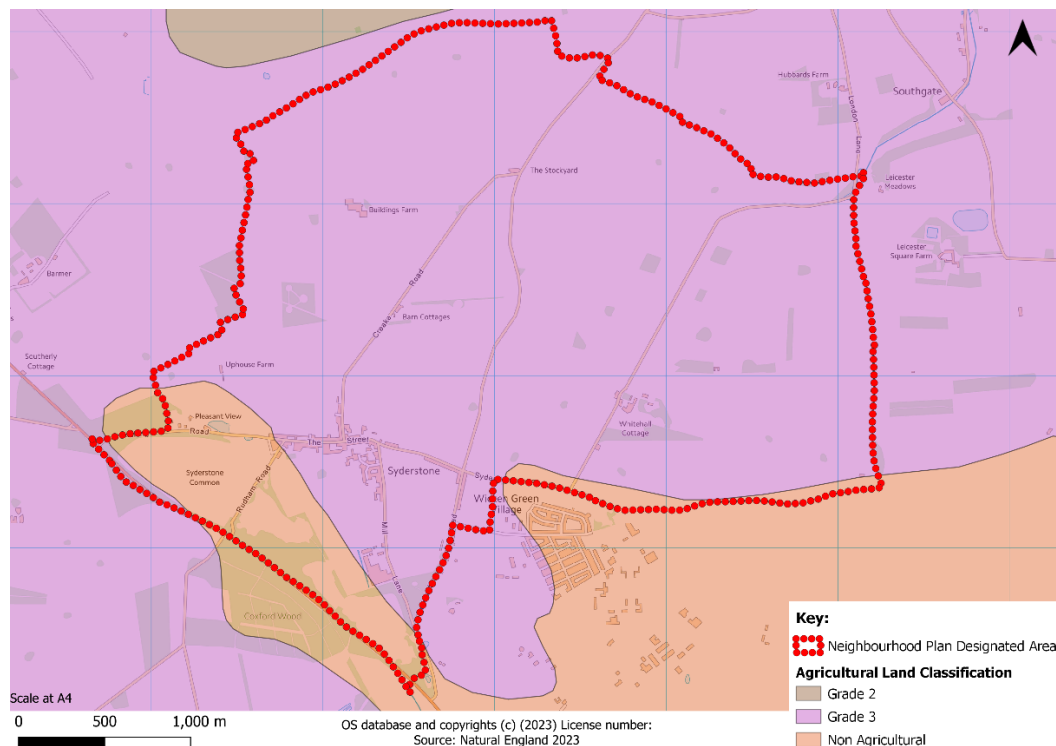
¹⁵ Census 2011. Nomis Local Area Report for Syderstone. Source: [Local Area Report for areas in England and Wales - Nomis \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](#)

27. As part of the National Air Quality Strategy all local authorities are obliged to establish air quality levels in their area that meet national air quality objectives. If an area does not meet these objectives Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are declared. The King’s Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council Air Quality Annual Status Report (2023) confirms that there are two Air Quality Management Areas in the borough these are within King’s Lynn at Gaywood Clock and Railway Road. Gaywood Clock and Railway Road AQMAs are approximately 18 miles southwest of the SNP area¹⁶. This would suggest that air quality is generally not of a concern in the SNP area, and indeed the report confirms that air quality could be improved but a number of measures have been put in place to improve local air quality.

Soil

28. The parish contains predominantly Grade 3 agricultural land and non-agricultural land, as identified by the Agricultural Land Classification Scale (**Figure 7**). Grade 3 is considered to be good to moderate land capable of producing yields of crops. There could be moderate limitations which affect the choice of crop. There is no Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land in the parish which is considered to be of very good to excellent quality.

Figure 7-Agricultural Land Classification (Source, Natural England (2024))

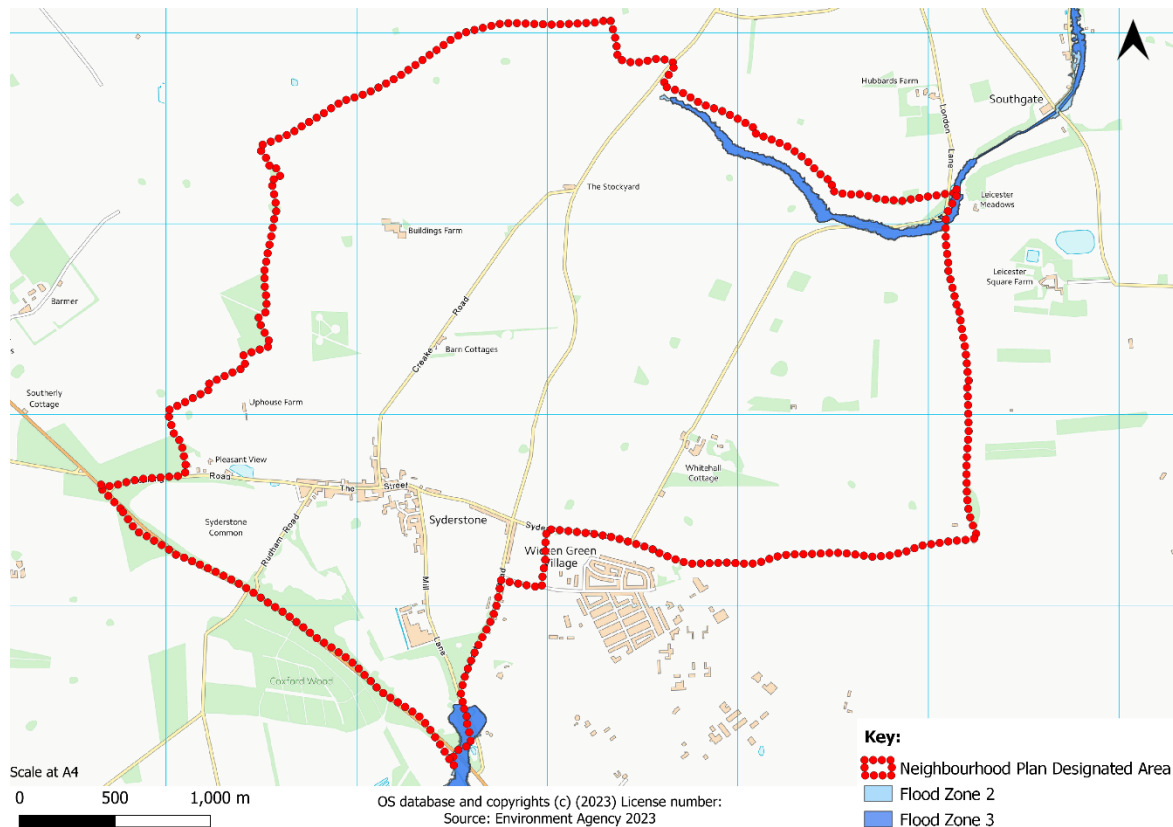


Water

¹⁶Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk Air Quality Annual Status Report (2023) Available at: [Air quality annual status report 2023 | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/air-quality/annual-status-report-2023)

29. According to Environment Agency the parish falls predominantly within Flood Zone 1, including the more built-up parts of the settlement, which means there is a low risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. National policy is to locate development in areas least likely to flood. Based on current mapping, this is unlikely to be a constraint on development in the plan area. The nearest high risk flood area (Flood Zone 2 and 3) from rivers or the sea is to the south along Mill Lane and northeast of the parish boundary along London Lane and in surrounding fields (**Figure 8**).

Figure 8- Flood risk from rivers and sea in Syderstone (Source: Environment Agency, 2023)



30. The Environment Agency future flood risk modelling shows that there is low, medium, and high risk of surface water flooding (ponding) in parts of the parish, including around existing buildings, roads, gardens, and open landscape within the built-up parts of Syderstone, see **Figures 9 and 10**. The mapping indicates this mainly affects agricultural land, areas where water sources may be present such as drainage ditches, ponds or even ghost ponds, residential property along The Street and the highway such as along Docking Road, Rudham Road, The Street, Mill Lane, and London Lane.

Figure 9- Surface Water Flood Risk within the whole parish (Source: Environment Agency, 2023)

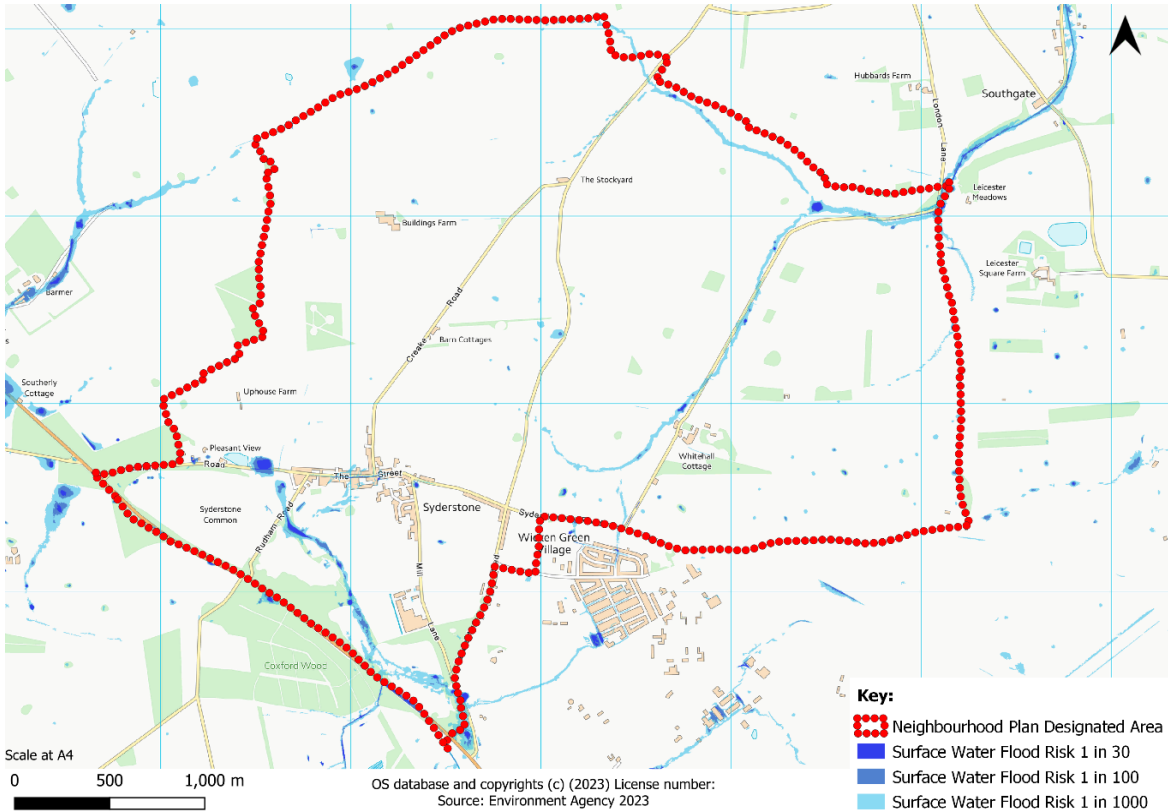
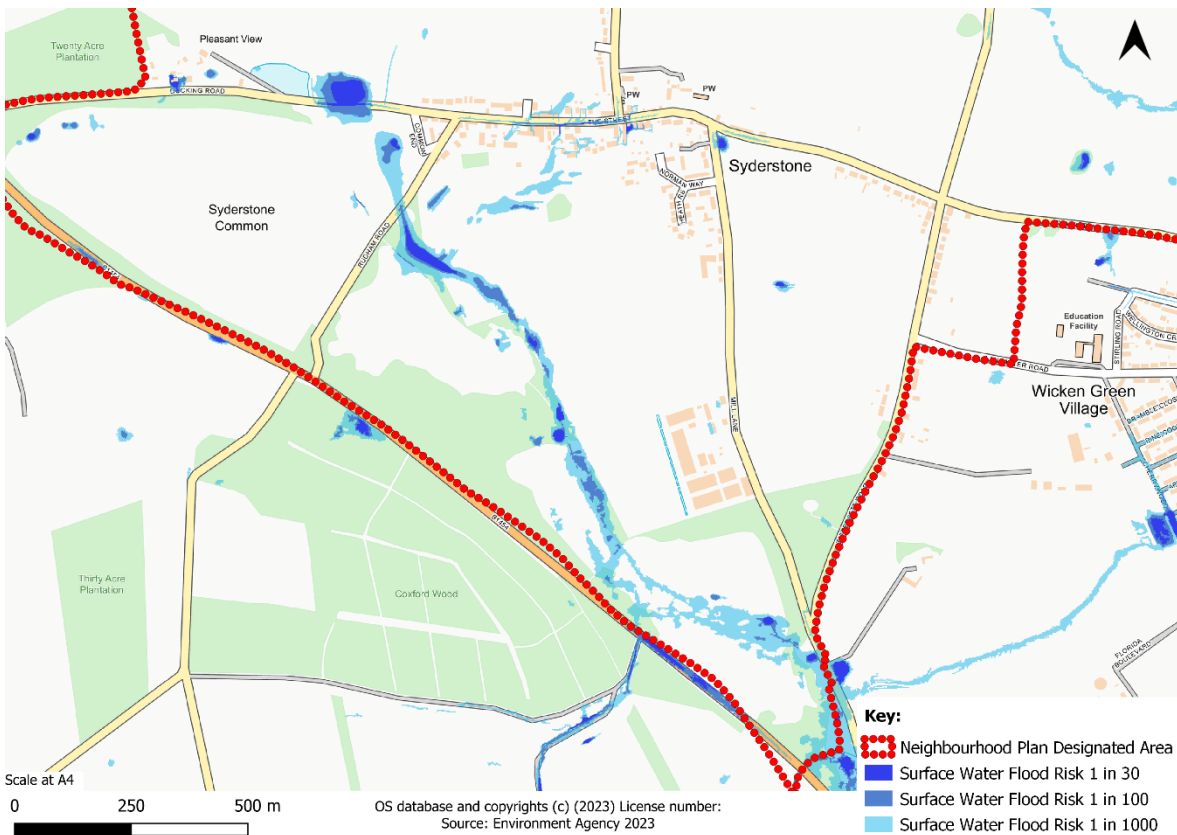


Figure 10-Surface Water Flood Risk within the built-up area of Syderstone (Source: Environment Agency, 2023)



31. Reviewing the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) Level 1 (2018) and Level 2 (2019) Reports¹⁷, Syderstone was not mentioned specifically. However, development is required to complete a site-specific FRA if a site falls within flood zones 2 or 3, is at risk of flooding from other sources including surface water or is in flood risk zone 1 and is 1ha or more¹⁸. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) datasets show no report/investigation of flooding in the parish over recent years¹⁹.

Material Assets

32. Syderstone is identified as a rural village in the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy (2011). The services available in Syderstone include St Mary's Church, Allotments, Playing Field, Village Hall and the Bus Service. The nearest core services residents would need such as the GP are in Docking, Fakenham, or Burnham Market and one would need private transport. There are a few local businesses within the parish which many are based at Syderstone Business Park along Mill Lane. This includes a number of trades within storage units such as motor services, timber services, self-storage facilities, kitchen furniture shop, plant, and machine hire.
33. There is a public house building within the village, however, this has been vacant for 4-5 years. The nearest core services residents would need such as the GP are in Docking, Fakenham, or Burnham Market and one would need private transport. Syderstone Village Hall has assumed an important role and position in village life with the demise of the Lynn Arms as the village pub and the now quite distant loss of village shops and a Post Office. Formerly the village school, the building commands a prominent position opposite the church and on the junction between The Street and Mill Lane.
34. There are a few existing green spaces, which have been listed above as local facilities, within the parish including the Allotments/Community growing spaces north of The Street, St Mary's Church Religious Grounds north of The Street and the Playing field West of Mill Lane and Norman Way. These can be accessed via public footpaths.
35. There are two bus services (26A and 201) which travel through Syderstone via The Street from Fakenham to Wells Next the Sea. 26A and 201 services are part of Sanders Coaches Ltd and allow residents/visitors to travel to nearby villages and towns. The 26A bus service runs Monday to Friday when Fakenham Academy is open, allowing children from villages such as Syderstone to get to the high school²⁰. Bus service 201 is also a school day service only bus which runs between Wells next

¹⁷ [Flood risk assessment - Level 2 | Flood risk assessment - Level 2 | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁸ [Flood risk assessment - Level 1 | Flood risk assessment - Level 1 | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁹ [Flood investigations - Norfolk County Council](#)

²⁰ [26 | 26A | Sanders Coaches](#)

the Sea and Wicken Green which will allow for children to get to Wells Primary School and Well Alderman Pell Secondary School²¹. Two bus stops in Syderstone travel to Wells and Fakenham via the 201 and 26A including Syderstone Village Hall bus stop and The Street. The negative aspect of these bus services is the fact that they do not run at the weekends and potentially the 201 does not run within school holidays. This means that relying on public transport in the parish would not be considered sustainable.

36. Within the village there is a network of kerbed footways such as along The Street, Creake Road, Docking Road, Rudham Rd, Mill Lane and Tattersett Road. These paths would allow safe access to various facilities and services in the area. Along most of the streets/roads the footpaths are located on one side and can be narrow. Typical for the character of the area there are grass verges which individuals could walk along to avoid walking directly in the road. In the more built up areas of the parish the speed limit is 30-40mph. There is no dedicated cycle lane or national cycle route running through the parish. Due to the lower speed limits, cycling would be safe. However, when leaving more built up parts of the settlements the road network along the B Roads turn back into 60mph which individuals would need to be conscious of.
37. Looking at the data available via Norfolk County Council (**Figure 11**) there are a number of restricted byways within the parish. These are predominantly to the west and south of the built-up area. This includes:
- One route leading north from Docking Road towards Burnham Road in Great Barwick parish and north-west towards Barmer in Bagthorpe parish.
 - One route coming off of Creake Road to the west.
 - One route crossing from the south-east of the parish near Mill Lane and B1454 (close to East Rudham parish) north towards Rudham Road, Docking Road and towards Bagthorpe Parish. This route also goes through Syderstone Common (SSSI) which is a restricted byway which will bring recreational attraction and potential pressures.
38. There is one public footpath within the parish linking The Street to Creake Road alongside St Mary's Church towards Barn Cottages and there are a number of circular walks advertised in the parish and beyond which link up to the public rights of way (**Figure 12**).

²¹ [201 School Day Service Only | Sanders Coaches](#)

Figure 11- Public Rights of Way within Syderstone (Source: Norfolk County Council, 2024)

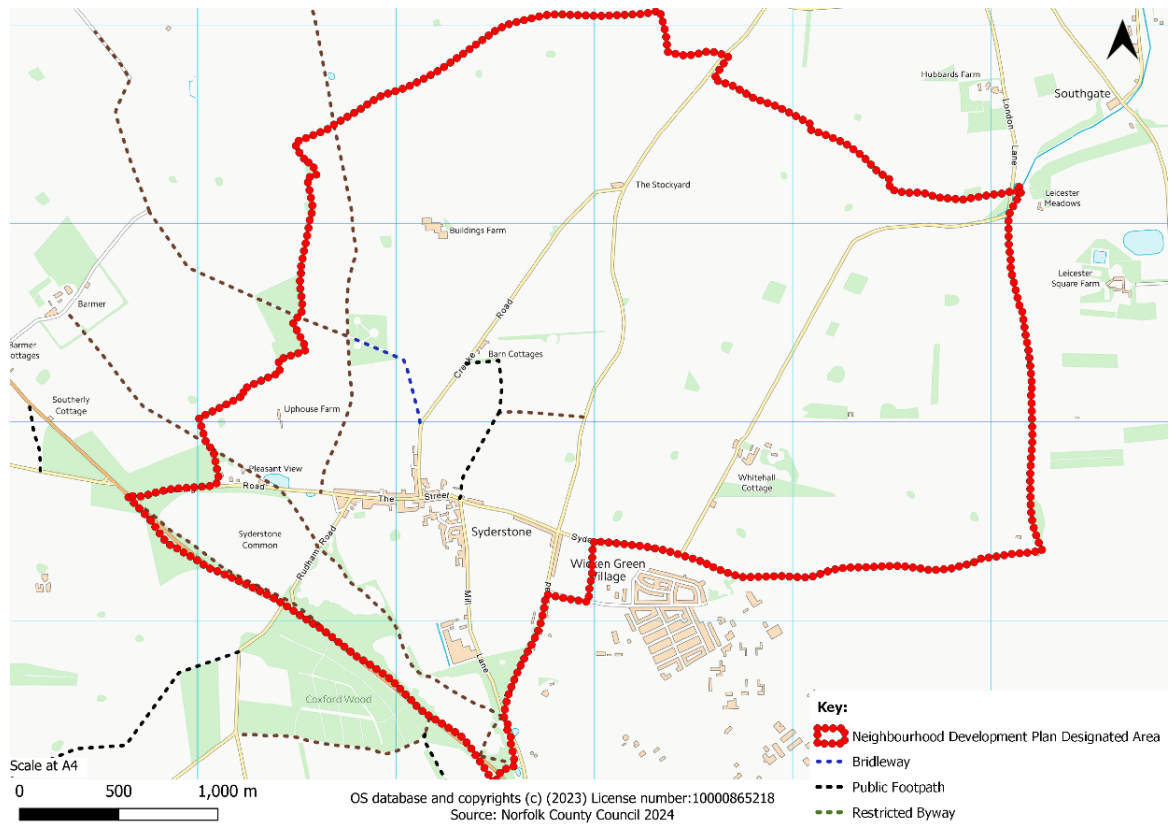
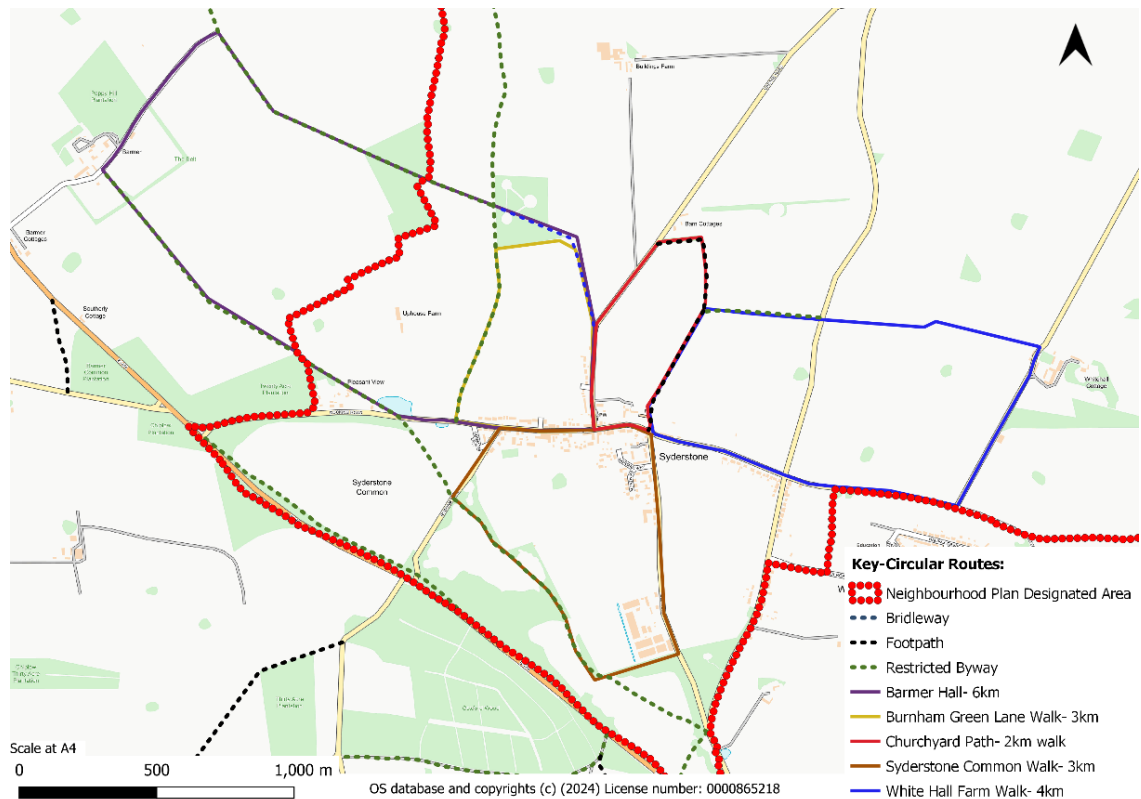
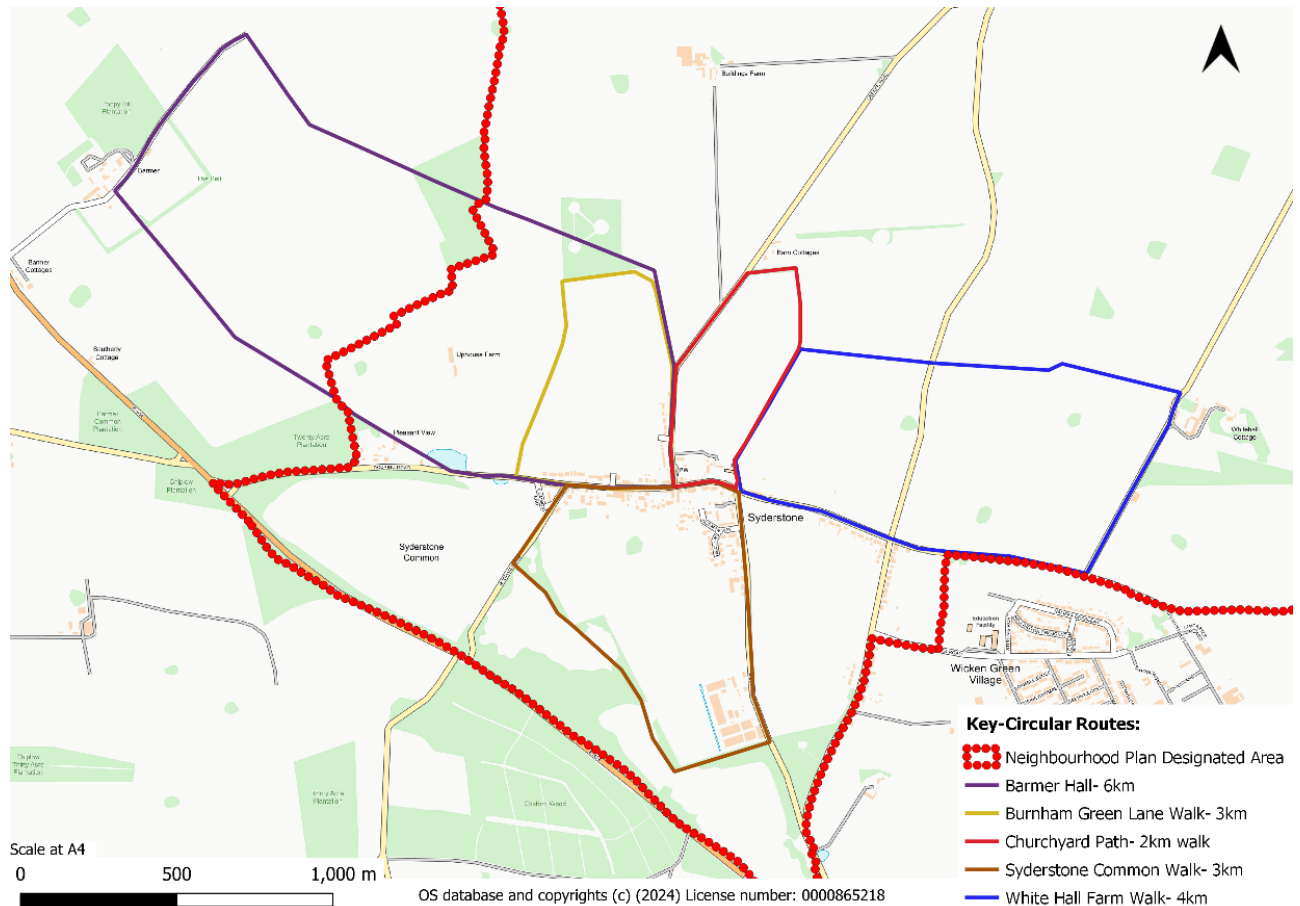


Figure 12- Syderstone Circular Routes and Public Rights of Way



39. **Figure 13** shows five short walks between 2km-6km which residents and visitors can use for recreational purposes; some of these routes cross over and in total the parish has 8.6km of public paths which lead into the countryside.

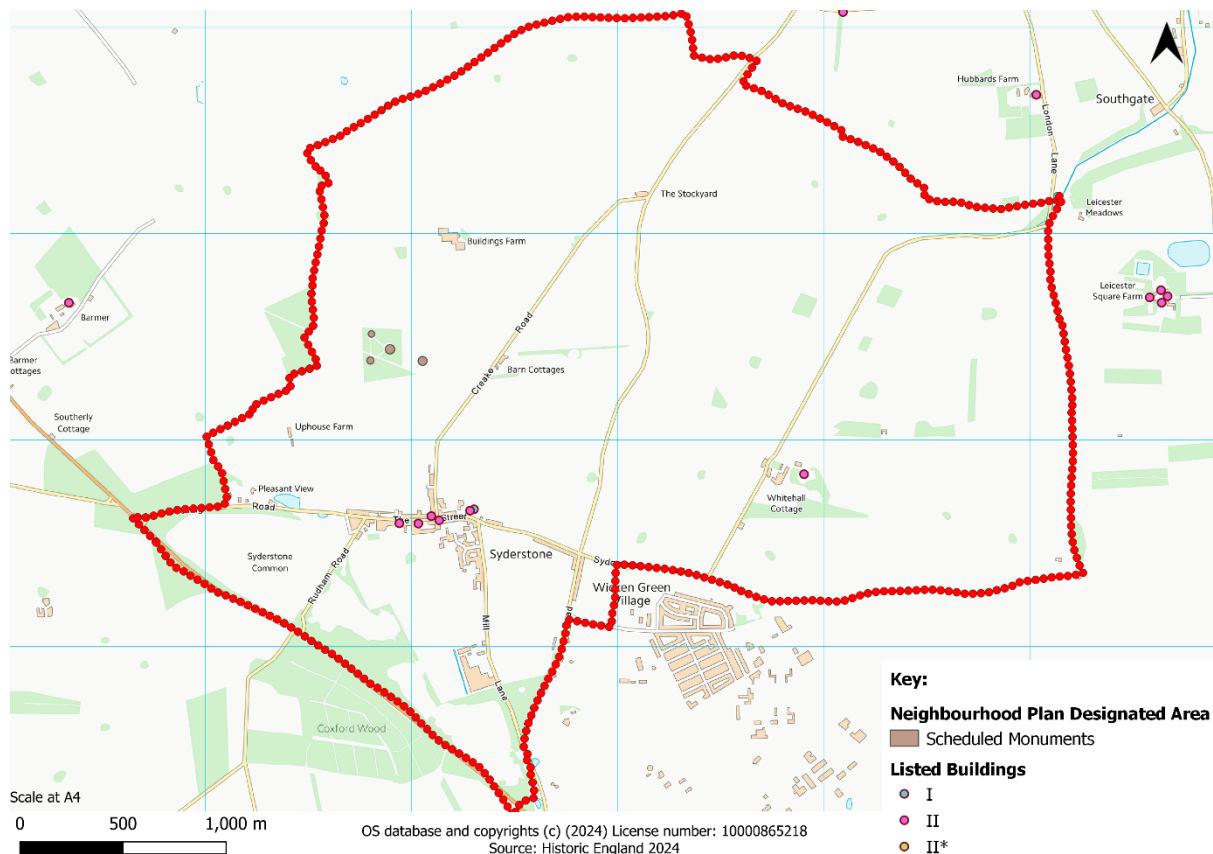
Figure 13- Circular Routes



Cultural Heritage

40. There are seven listed buildings within the area as identified in **Figure 14**²². The majority of listed buildings are Grade II and many of these are situated in the built-up area around The Street and also one Grade II building called White Hall east of London Lane. There is one Grade I building which is Church of St Mary. There is one Scheduled Monument designation within the parish which is a group of four bowl barrows 600m southwest of Buildings Farm (**Figure 14**) which is west of Creake Road.

Figure 14- Listed buildings within Syderstone (Source: Historic England, 2023)

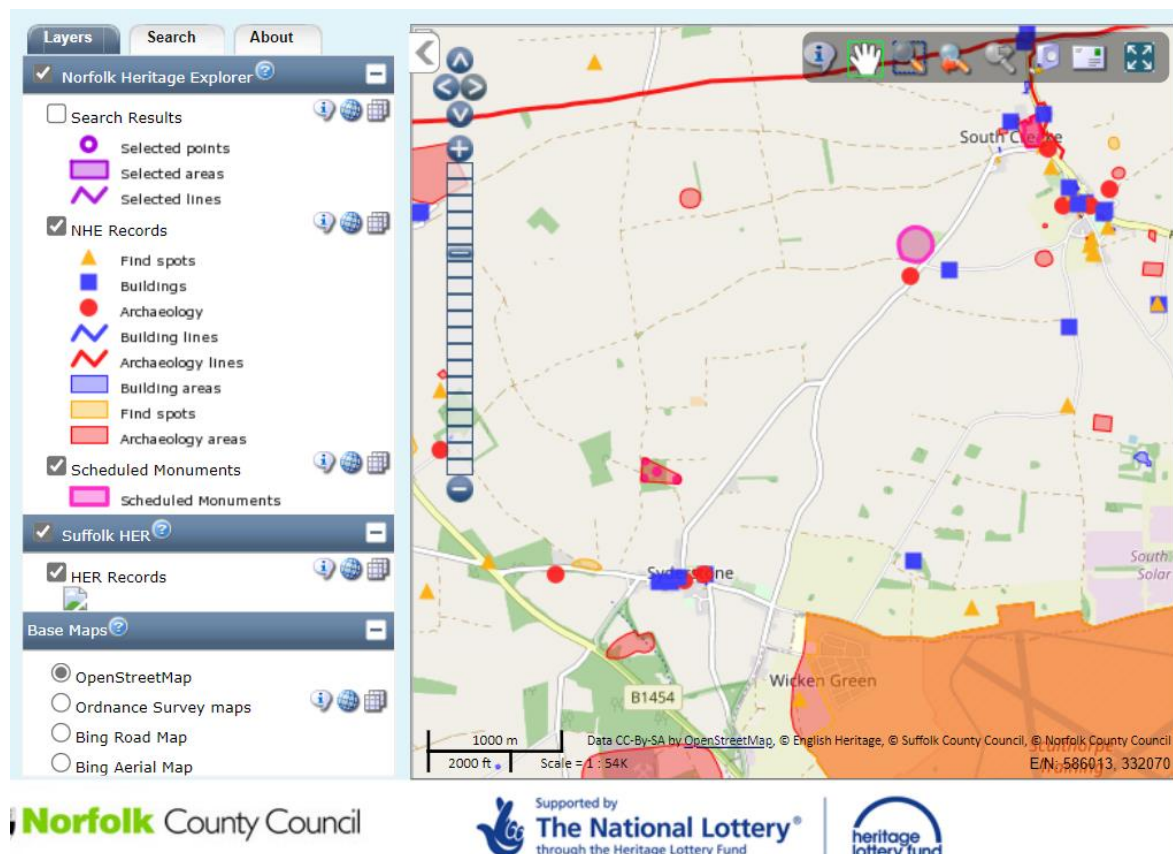


41. There are no Battlefields, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, World Heritage Sites, or other historic designations within the neighbourhood area. Adjacent to the parish is Bloodgate Hill fort, South Creake, which dates back to the Iron Age (between 800 BC to 43 AD), with some evidence of activity going back as far as the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. No Roman age buildings have as of yet been located in Syderstone, but it is likely that one existed due to the quantity of Roman age remains which have been found in the area. The oldest building in the village is the Norman church of St Mary, one of Norfolk's round tower churches. It is likely that the existing stone building replaced an earlier Saxon wooden building.

²² [National Heritage List for England \(NHLE\) \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.arcgis.com)

42. According to Norfolk Heritage Explorer²³ there are 36 records of historic artefacts, structures, buildings, and marking in the landscape such as crop marks and ditches within the neighbourhood area. These include assets from multiple time periods including the Prehistoric age, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Middle and Late Saxon, Roman, Medieval, and post-medieval, 14th to 20th century such as World War Two. Finds have included but are not limited to axe heads, brooches and buttons, coins, flint flakes, copper and metal objects, possible Roman roads/trackways and sites of historic buildings including Manor Farmhouse, Thurby House, St Mary’s Church, Syderstone School, The Laurels, White Hall (**Figure 15**).

Figure 15- Historic Finds within Syderstone (Source: Norfolk Heritage Explorer, 2023)



²³ [Your Search Results - Norfolk Heritage Explorer](#)

Landscape

43. The West Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment²⁴ identifies that the neighbourhood area falls within an intermediate, heath & moorland, dispersed unwooded national landscape character type. The natural typology of the settlement is made up of hard (palaeozoic) rocks, soft/sandy drift rock and deep soils. The cultural typology is considered to be nucleated, large farms and estate plantations. Whilst Syderstone has not been given a specific landscape character area it is adjacent to Bagthorpe parish which is identified as rolling open farmland so it can be assumed Syderstone will be of a similar characteristic.

44. The rolling open farmland character area is characterised as having:

- A medium to large scale landscape with an overriding sense of openness, wide open skies, medium to large field units, and the presence of large features such as linear Scots pine shelterbelts.
- Shallow river valleys and dry tributary valleys cut through the Middle and Upper Chalk geology to give rise to a gently rolling landform.
- Dominated by intensive arable crop production contained within a network of regular shaped fields that form a strong geometric landscape pattern.
- Dramatic linear shelterbelts of Scots pine are visible from long range - looming over the horizontal plane and forming distinct focal points.
- Hawthorn hedgerows demarcate field boundaries and align rural roads. These exaggerate the
- strong landscape lines and provide focused channelled views. Hedgerow trees, predominantly oak and beech are often clothed in ivy.
- Dispersed low-density settlement comprising isolated farmsteads, rural hamlets, and villages. The latter generally occur at road crossings and take a linear or bilinear form. They generally appear contained rather than sprawling due to their small size and scale. Churches are a key symbolic feature of settlements although sometimes detached from the main settlement hub.
- A prominent skyline, often uninterrupted and smooth - the strong horizon line giving way to wide open skies. The skyline is also characterised in places by the silhouettes of Scots pine shelterbelts, hedgerow trees and the presence of pylons, posts and communication masts.
- Churches associated with settlements are often located on discrete knolls, their towers and spires acting as distinct focal points.
- Settlements are generally discrete.
- Although there is an overriding sense of openness, views into other landscape types are restricted due to the rolling landform and the elevated plateaux, which often limit views.
- The network of rural roads and lanes is the most obvious source of movement (these are often very straight and flanked by wide grass verges) but overall movement is minimal and the landscape feels very still.

²⁴ kLWN Landscape Character Assessment, Final Report March 2007, Chris Blandford Associates

- Due to its largely unsettled character and extensive areas of undeveloped land, the landscape often feels remote and peaceful.
- Drove-wide road corridors.

45. Inherent landscape sensitivities are:

- Mature landscape structure including belts and copses, woodland, mature trees, and patches of intact hedgerow.
- Distinctive combinations of traditional building materials within small village settlements.
- Relatively strong sense of place.

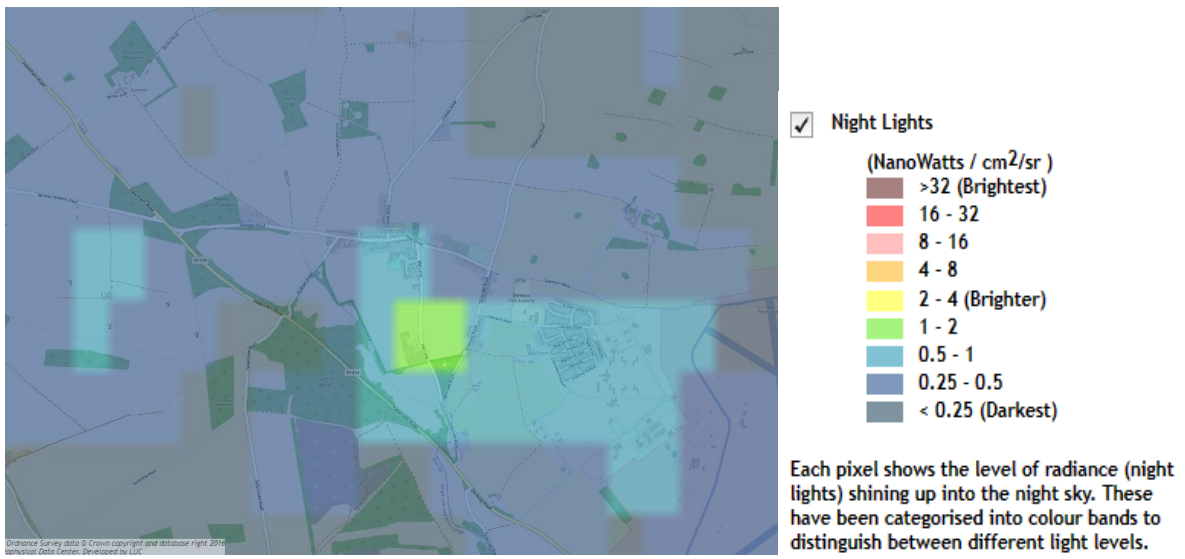
46. The landscape planning guidelines for Bagthorpe (adjacent to Syderstone) which can be relevant to Syderstone include:

- Seek to conserve the generally undeveloped, rural character of the area and related strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity.
- Ensure that any new appropriate development responds to historic settlement pattern and is well integrated into the surrounding landscape.
- Seek to ensure the sensitive location of development involving tall structures (such as
- telecommunications masts and wind turbines for example) in relation to prominent skyline
- locations both within the character area and within adjacent character areas.
- Seek to promote the use of local materials, including flint, chalk clunch, pebbles and pantiles.

47. The CPRE Dark Skies Mapping²⁵ (**Figure 16**) shows that much of the Parish, falls into the darkest to dark categories (1-- <0.25 NanoWatts/cm²/sr) suggesting that most of the parish is made up of a dark landscape with limited light pollution. However, the areas with the brighter night lights are around the built-up area of The Street and Mill Lane. Development which can help limit light pollution rather than add to the issue in the parish would be beneficial.

²⁵ [England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies \(cpre.org.uk\)](http://cpre.org.uk)

Figure 16-Dark Skies (CPRE, 2024)



Legislative Background

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

48. The European Directive 2001/42/EC²⁶ is the basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation, which was transposed into English secondary legislation by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 otherwise known as the SEA Regulations. A SEA would be required if the implementation of the contents of the Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan are likely to cause significant environmental effects.
49. The assessment undertaken will follow and answer specific questions using criteria drawn from the European SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 when determining the likely significance of effects as shown in **Figure 17**²⁷.
50. **Figure 18** presents the flow diagram entitled Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes which is taken from the Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, published in September 2005²⁸. **Figure 19** below assesses whether SNP will require a full SEA. The questions in the first column are drawn from **Figure 17** which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

51. It is required by Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and by regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended 2017) that an appropriate assessment is carried out with regard to the Conservation Objectives of the European Sites and with reference to other plans and projects to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.
52. To fulfil the legal requirements if likely significant effects will occur with the implementation of a neighbourhood plan upon the European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) a screening assessment has been undertaken.
53. An assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the draft SNP requires an SEA or HRA in accordance with the above regulations. The results can be viewed below.

²⁶ [EUR-Lex - 32001L0042 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

²⁷ [The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

²⁸

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practical_guidesea.pdf

Figure 17-Schedule 1 Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects

SCHEDULE 1- CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:
 - a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
 - b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
 - c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
 - d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
 - e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of [F1retained EU law] on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
 - a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
 - b) the cumulative nature of the effects;
 - c) the transboundary nature of the effects;
 - d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
 - e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
 - f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—
 - (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
 - (iii) intensive land-use; and
 - g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

Figure 18-Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

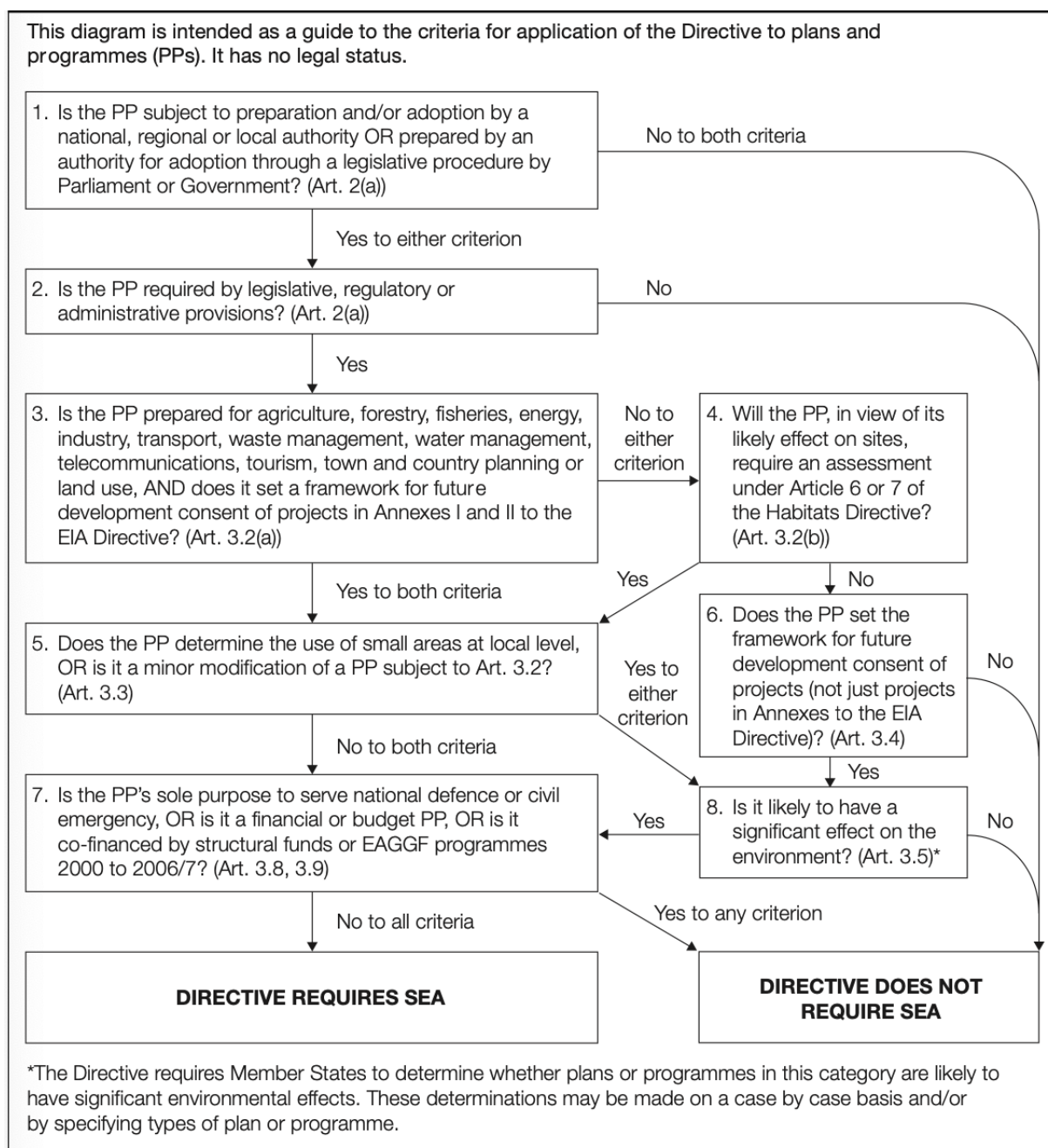


Figure 19-Application of SEA Directive to SNP

*PP in this instance refers to Neighbourhood Plan Review

Stage		Y/N	Justification
1	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional, or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government (Art. 2(a))	Y	<p>The NP is being prepared by the parish council (as the “relevant qualifying body”) and will be made by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk the local authority which falls within the designated area subject to Syderstone passing an independent examination and successful local community referendum.</p> <p>The preparation of the Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan is allowed under primary legislation: The Town and Country Planning Act (1990) as amended by the Localism Act (2011).</p> <p>The preparation of NP’s are subject to several relevant regulations as shown below (not intend to be a complete list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, • the Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012 • the Neighbourhood Planning (General)(Amendment) Regulations 2015 • the Neighbourhood Planning (General)and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016 • the Neighbourhood Planning (General)and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2017 <p>GO TO STAGE 2</p>
2	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Y	<p>Whilst it is not a requirement for a parish to create a Neighbourhood Plan under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) and Localism Act (2011), the NP will eventually be “made” and form part of the Development Plan for the Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk. This authority is directed by legislative processes, and it is important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether an SEA is required under the Directive.</p>

	Stage	Y/N	Justification
			GO TO STAGE 3
3	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))	Y/N	<p>Developments that fall within Annex I are ‘excluded’ development for Neighbourhood Plans (as set out in Section 61(k) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as subsequently amended)²⁹ and the Localism Act 2011 Schedule 9 Part 2 Para 7 Section 38 B (1)(b),(6)³⁰.</p> <p>A Neighbourhood Plan is prepared for Town and Country Planning and Land use. The Syderstone neighbourhood plan can include at a neighbourhood level, through different policy areas, the framework for development that would fall within Annex II of the EIA Directive. This neighbourhood plan has not set out a framework to manage future development of the scale and nature envisaged by Annex II of the EIA Directive.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared to set out a framework for town and country planning and land use within the Parish of Syderstone. Its intention is to complement the higher order strategic framework that already exists for land use planning across the Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to align and be in general conformity with the strategic framework.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan is not allocating any development itself but anticipates being one of the key tools to manage future development of Syderstone.</p> <p>GO TO STAGE 4</p>
4	Will the Neighbourhood Plan (PP), in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.3)	N	<p>A Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have impacts on sites covered by the Habitats Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is not proposing to make site allocations for residential housing or business purposes. Please see chapter 5 of this report for further detail.</p> <p>GO TO STAGE 6</p>

²⁹ [Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

³⁰ [Localism Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

Stage		Y/N	Justification
5	Does the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Y	A Neighbourhood Plan can determine the use of small areas at a local level. The Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any sites for development. However, proposes to include a variety of policies to create sustainable development through location, design, and environmental protections such as designating local green spaces, important local views and green corridors for habitat enhancement.
6	Does the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	Y	Once a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted this forms part of the statutory Development Plan and will be used by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk in the determination of planning applications. The intention is that the Neighbourhood Plan will provide a land use policy framework for future development at a local level.
7	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP)'s sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	<p>Does not apply to a Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>SKIPPED AS PER FIGURE 17.</p>	
8	Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	N	SEE FIGURE 17 – PLAN DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA

54. Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects. These are listed in **Figure 20** below along with comments on the extent to which the SNP meets these criteria.

Figure 20- Likely Significant Effects

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
<p>Characteristics of the plan and programmes, having regard in particular, to:</p>		
<p>a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources</p>	<p>Once made, SNP will become part of the statutory development plan and will guide the delivery of development within the designated plan area.</p> <p>The parish of Syderstone falls within the district of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk area. The King’s Lynn and West Norfolk 2011 Core Strategy designated Syderstone as a rural village.</p> <p>The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016) allocated one site G91.1- Land west of no. 26 The Street. The land amounted to 0.3 hectares and was allocated for residential development of at least 5 dwellings. This allocation has been carried over into the Local Plan Review, which is currently at the examination stage. The site has full planning permission for 5 homes (18/01917/F/21/02228/F). According to data supplied by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk in August 2023 it was built out in June 2023.</p> <p>In terms of the degree to which SNP sets a framework, it does not allocate land for development.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy</p>	<p>The Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted alongside the higher order adopted Local Plans and National Planning Policy Framework and form part of the Borough Council’s Development Plans. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity to the strategic framework and will expand upon some of the Local Plan policies,</p>	<p>N</p>

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
	<p>providing supplementary information on a local scale.</p> <p>It does not have influence over other plans. However, once made SNP will form part of the statutory development plans for Syderstone and will be used in conjunction with the current development plans to determine planning applications.</p>	
<p>c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development</p>	<p>One of the Basic Conditions which SNP must meet is to contribute towards sustainable development. Some of the policies within the plan will focus on environmental protection including designating local green spaces, important local views, creating green corridors for biodiversity/habitat enhancement, protecting existing trees/hedgerows, and avoiding unnecessary light pollution in a dark skies policy. These aim to ensure the effects on the environment are minimised within the plan area and promote positive action. Given the non-strategic nature of the SNP this does not have the potential to restrict the delivery of other plans or programmes.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme</p>	<p>Baseline information relating to SNP was described earlier in this Screening Document. There are no European statutory designated sites in the neighbourhood area, though there are a few important European designations within approximately 20km in all directions. These include The Greater Wash and North Norfolk Coast, Dersingham Bog, Roydon Common and the River Wensum which falls outside of the West Norfolk District boundary.</p> <p>There is one Natural England designated site in the parish- Syderstone Common a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) that sits south of the village between Rudham Road and Mill Lane.</p>	<p>N</p>

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
	The plan itself will not specifically allocate land for development and will not exacerbate any significant known environmental problems.	
e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (eg plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	The implementation of community legislation is unlikely to be significantly compromised by the Neighbourhood Plan.	N
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
a) The probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects	SNP does not contain any site-specific development proposals that will result in complex, widespread, long lasting, or serious environmental effects.	N
b) The cumulative nature of the effects	As it will not allocate land for development SNP will not lead to any cumulative effects in combination with existing or emerging plans.	N
c) Transboundary nature of effects	The emerging SNP area provides supplementary policy areas on a local scale such as design, The impacts for transboundary effects beyond the parish are unlikely to be significant.	N
d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	SNP is unlikely to produce any significant effects to human health or the environment.	N

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The SNP area has a total population of around 430 (Census 2021). This sits within the context of a total population of 154,300 in King's Lynn & West Norfolk district. SNP remains a non-strategic plan and the principle of development that will take place has already been established within the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan.	N
f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or iii. Intensive land-use	<p>i) There is one national statutory natural designation which falls within Syderstone and has been described above. Regarding cultural heritage, there are 8 statutory listed buildings or monuments within the neighbourhood plan area according to the latest data on the Historic England website. As the plan does not allocate land for development it is not anticipated to have likely significant effects on the natural and cultural characteristics of the area. Policies have also been put in place to afford protection in areas of natural and historical importance either through local green space designations, important local views, design or biodiversity.</p> <p>ii) SNP is unlikely to result in exceedance of environmental quality standards, such as those relating to air, water, and soil quality.</p> <p>iii) SNP is unlikely to bring forward development of an extent that would result in a significant intensification of Local land Use.</p> <p>The emerging SNP does not include site allocations and therefore are not anticipated to have likely significant effects on the parish.</p>	N
g) The effects on areas of landscapes which have a recognised	The Neighbourhood Plan Area does not have any recognised international, national, or local protection status.	N

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
national, Community or international protection status	<p>The nearest landscape of international status is the River Wensum which is 6km south of the parish/designated neighbourhood area followed by The Greater Wash and North Norfolk Coast, which is 10km north, Dersingham Bog, which is 15km southwest, and Roydon Common which is 17km southwest.</p> <p>SNP is not anticipated to have likely significant effects on designated landscapes given the plan cannot influence areas outside of the parish, it will not allocate land for development, and it contains a number of protective polices such as dark skies, local green spaces, important local views and biodiversity and green ecological corridors.</p> <p>The environmental effects on areas of international and national status have been considered and examined through the Local Plan.</p>	

HRA Screening assessment

55. It is required by Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and by regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended 2017) that an appropriate assessment is carried out with regard to the Conservation Objectives of the European Sites and with reference to other plans and projects to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.
56. To fulfil the legal requirements if likely significant effects will occur with the implementation of a neighbourhood plan upon the European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) a screening assessment has been undertaken.
57. An assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the draft SNP requires an SEA or HRA in accordance with the above regulations. **There are no designated European wildlife sites in the SNP area.** This screening assessment has also considered the impact on European Sites within 20km of the plan area, as an in-combination assessment area (**Figures 21 and 22**).

Figure 21- Map of European Sites within 20km of Syderstone

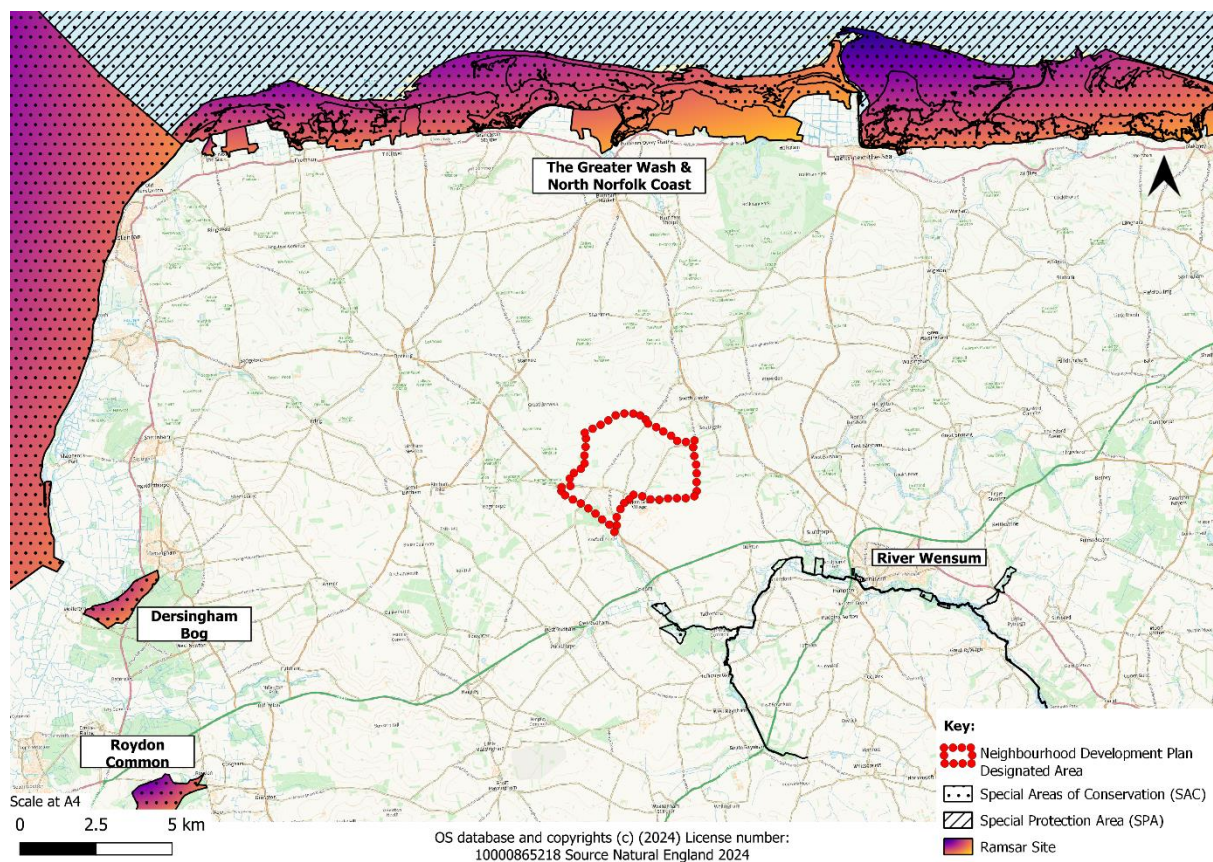


Figure 22- European Sites within 20km of Syderstone

Special Areas of Conservation	Special Protection Areas	Ramsar Sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roydon Common & Dersingham Bog • The Greater Wash & North Norfolk Coast • River Wensum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Greater Wash & North Norfolk Coast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roydon Common & Dersingham Bog • The Greater Wash & North Norfolk Coast

58. Each European site has a set of interest features which are the ecological features for which the site is designated or classified, and the features for which Member States should ensure the site is maintained or where necessary restored. Each site also has a set of conservation objectives.

59. European sites are at risk if there are possible means by which any aspect of a plan can, when being taken forward for implementation, pose a potential threat to the wildlife interest of the sites. This is often referred to as the ‘impact pathway’.

60. Potential impact pathways considered for this assessment include:

- Increased recreational pressure.
- Air quality impacts
- Water issues
- Urban effects

61. SNP does not allocate land for development and therefore will not directly result in an increase in the number of new dwellings within the vicinity of European Sites. An assessment of potential impacts of draft policy contained within SNP is provided in **Figure 23**

Figure 23- HRA Screening Assessment

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects	Potential Risks	Recommendation at Screening Stage
Policy 1: Syderstone’s General Design Codes	Requiring high quality design that accords with the Syderstone Design Codes/Guide Document 2024.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	N/A	None

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects	Potential Risks	Recommendation at Screening Stage
Policy 2: Design (Character Area 1- Historic Core)	Development proposals sited within the Historic Core Character Area (CA1) should have regard and provide evidence in their application that they have considered the 4 Design Codes in the Syderstone Design Codes Document.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	N/A	None
Policy 3: Design (Character Area 2- Post War Development)	Development proposals sited within the Post War Development (CA2) should have regard and provide evidence in their application that they have considered the 3 Design Codes in the Syderstone Design Codes Document.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	N/A	None
Policy 4: Housing	<p>This policy addresses housing mix, affordable housing and specialist housing for older people with specific regard to the results from the Syderstone Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) 2024 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements that ensure future housing development meets the needs of local people. • Sets a tenure split for affordable housing • Any specialist housing should have regard to the evidence in the Syderstone HNA. 	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	N/A	None

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects	Potential Risks	Recommendation at Screening Stage
Policy 5: Biodiversity and Green Ecological Corridors	<p>Requirement to deliver a greater net gain than 10% in ecological value will be supported.</p> <p>Development should not have an adverse impact on important wildlife habitats and species in Syderstone.</p> <p>Green ecological corridors have been mapped out with local natural features in mind which proposed developments within or adjacent to the corridors should have regard to enhance or restore habitat connectivity.</p>	No LSE – mitigation policy for growth	N/A	None
Policy 6: Trees and Hedgerows	Policy setting out detail/criteria on protecting existing trees and hedgerows in the parish, replacement trees and new tree planting.	No LSE – protective policy	N/A	None
Policy 7: Local Green Spaces	Protection of green spaces of local importance from future development.	No LSE – supports retention of green open spaces, conserving the natural environment	N/A	None
Policy 8: Protection of Important Local Views	Protection of important local views means proposals must demonstrate that development is sited and designed to be of a form and scale which avoids harm to the views.	No LSE – protective policy	N/A	None
Policy 9: Dark Skies	Policy to protect unnecessary light pollution from new developments	No LSE – protective policy	N/A	None

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects	Potential Risks	Recommendation at Screening Stage
Policy 9: Community Facilities and Employment Services	Policy protects the Amy Robsart Hall as a community facility. It also sets out that expanding or new employment services will be supported if they conform with other relevant NDP policies.	No LSE – does not promote development	N/A	None
Policy 10: Walking and Access	New built development within the existing footway network, or adjacent, will be expected to provide new or improved links to the network which are safe, accessible for all and appropriate for all weather conditions.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	N/A	None

SEA and HRA Screening Conclusion

62. The HRA Screening Assessment concludes that no significant effects are likely to occur with regards to the integrity of European Wildlife Sites within 20km of the SNP area. For this reason, a full SEA/HRA and Appropriate Assessment is not required at this point and is **screened out**.