



Pearmtree Hill Solar Farm

Environmental Statement

Volume 4

Appendix 11.2: Extracts from Published Landscape Character Assessments

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning

(Applications: Prescribed Forms

Application Document Ref: EN010157/APP/6.4 and Procedure) Regulations 2009 –

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Regulation 5(2)(a)

Appendix 11.2: Extracts from Published Landscape Character Assessments

Introduction

- 1.1.1 This appendix collates and, where necessary, provides commentary on relevant extracts from the following published landscape character assessments which cover the study area:
- National Character Area Profile 40: Holderness [Ref. A11.2-1]
 - East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment [Ref. A11.2-2]
- 1.1.2 It is noted that the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment contains various judgements regarding sensitivity and the capacity of the landscape to accommodate various forms of development although solar development is not discussed. The judgements relating to sensitivity and capacity are not reproduced in this appendix but are taken into account in the consideration of landscape sensitivity in **ES Volume 4, Appendix 11.3: Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal [EN010157/APP/6.4]**.

National Landscape Character

- 1.1.3 The landscape character of England was assessed and classified as part of the Character of England project published by the then Countryside Agency in 1999 and updated between 2011 and 2015 by Natural England. The studies identified a number of National Character Areas (NCA).
- 1.1.4 The Site and full extent of the study area fall within NCA40: Holderness. The following paragraphs are from the summary description of the NCA, in the Natural England profile [Ref. A11.2-1], and are relevant to the study area:

“Holderness is a rural, low-lying, undulating plain with the broad, shallow valley of the River Hull flowing southwards through the centre towards Hull. The river eventually joins the expansive Humber Estuary where it becomes tidal, enclosed by flood banks, and drains into the North Sea.

An extensive network of rivers, ditches, becks, dykes and canals drains the River Hull. The river’s flood plain, of mainly base-rich loamy and clayey soils, is important for food production, with vegetables and root crops grown in the shallow valley and arable farming taking place on higher land in the west and the south-east, near the coast. The high-quality agricultural land comprises

large field patterns bounded by drainage ditches on the River Hull flood plain, and there are hedgerows on higher ground.

Long views over the flat landscape and the relatively dispersed nature of settlement instil a sense of tranquillity... Small, traditional villages are dispersed throughout the area, many of which have village greens, ponds and churches, some dating back to Norman times. Beverley is the largest inland settlement in the NCA and is distinctive for its large minster and historic expanses of open access grazing land – Beverley Westwood, Figham and Swinemoor.”

1.1.5 The summary description also states:

“The NCA is bounded by the dip slope of the Yorkshire Wolds to the north and west, while eastwards, beyond the coastline of soft boulder clay cliffs, lies the North Sea. Rapid erosion of these cliffs is a conspicuous feature of this NCA, and forms part of an important coastal process of sediment transfer. Holderness is the single most important source of sediment in the southern North Sea: the sediment is carried south to the Humber, the Lincolnshire coast and the Wash, where it feeds beaches and through accretion helps intertidal habitats to adjust to rising sea levels.

Ensuring a sustainable approach to flood and coastal risk management and enabling the coast to continue to provide sediment to other areas will be important considerations for the future.”

1.1.6 The key characteristics of NCA40: Holderness relevant to the study area are recorded as follows:

- *“A broad, gently undulating plain which is centred on the valley of the River Hull and is drained by a network of canals, ditches and canalised tributaries.*
- *Long views with arable farmland sloping upwards bounded by the dip slope of the Yorkshire Wolds to the north and west.*
- *Glacial landscape of boulder clay, gravels and alluvium over chalk with many glacial features including hummocky terrain, moraine-like ridges and kettle holes. Low, rapidly eroding coastline of soft clay cliffs.*
- *Sparse tree and woodland cover leading to a generally open landscape with long views, enclosed by the Wolds to the north and west.*
- *High-quality agricultural land used predominantly for large-scale arable cultivation and some livestock farming.*
- *Large field patterns bounded by drainage ditches on the River Hull flood plain,*

and hedgerows on higher ground.

- *Highly fragmented remnants of semi-natural vegetation including carr, swamp and wet grassland and Hornsea Mere, a large, natural lake designated for its associated habitats and bird species.*
- *A network of minor winding roads and lanes, linking dispersed villages and hamlets, with village churches providing prominent landmarks in the flat landscape. Many villages have a variety of buildings grouped around ponds and village greens.*
- *The principal towns of Holderness are Driffield, Beverley and the coastal resort of Bridlington, together with the smaller coastal settlements of Hornsea and Withernsea. Part of the urban fringe of the City of Hull extends northwards into Holderness.*
- *Traditional farmsteads, houses and other buildings characterised by red brick and pantiles. Occasional buildings towards the coast constructed from Holderness cobbles and older buildings including churches often built in limestone.*
- *Beverley Minster, a large gothic building completed in 1425, and Burton Constable, an Elizabethan country house whose parkland was landscaped by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, are key heritage assets."*

- 1.1.7 Under the heading of 'Holderness Today', the NCA40 profile describes the area as:

"A productively farmed, low-lying landscape located east of the Yorkshire Wolds. A broad, undulating plain, centred on the valley of the River Hull, this largely rural area is shaped by modest changes in topography, tree cover and land use.

Arable cultivation accounts for 82 per cent of land cover. Mainly cereals and root crops are grown on the lower slopes of the Wolds and the slightly raised land between Hull and the North Sea, while in the lower reaches of the Hull Valley root crops and vegetables are grown.

Fields are generally large and woodland cover sparse, and in the Hull Valley the large fields, bounded by ditches and dykes, contribute to an open landscape character with long and open views throughout. Where woods do occur, they provide enclosure and structure, but areas of ancient woodland are limited."

- 1.1.8 The following are detailed as 'Opportunities' for the NCA40: Holderness:

- *"Statement of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) 1: Conserve, manage and enhance the River Hull and associated river system with its many associated*

drains, dykes and streams to improve water quality and supply, sustainably address flood risk management, and enhance biodiversity and the historic environment through a strategic, landscape-scale approach.

- *SEO 2: Work with landowners and land managers to support sustainable food production while enhancing and strengthening the network of farmland features; create and expand habitats in the farmed environment to enhance biodiversity and improve soil and water quality; strengthen resilience of habitats to climate change; and enhance landscape character.*
- *SEO 3: Allow essential coastal processes to occur, including erosion of the soft clay cliffs, while respecting policies that reduce erosion and flood risk in relation to key coastal settlements.*
- *SEO 4: Enhance people's understanding and enjoyment of the geodiversity, historic sites, seaside character and remoteness that contribute to the varied sense of place and valuable recreational assets that the area provides.*
- *Additional Opportunity 1. Improve access to public enjoyment of the open, rural landscape, the coast and wildlife by improving green infrastructure links between urban and rural/ coastal areas and within urban settlements."*

- 1.1.9 In relation to the above opportunities the Proposed Development benefits both SEO2 by including landscape proposals which will, *"create and expand habitats in the farmed environment to enhance biodiversity...; strengthen resilience of habitats to climate change; and enhance landscape character"* and Additional Opportunity 1 by creating a series of permissive paths around the Site which would link with the existing public rights of way network and increase accessibility around the Site.

Local Landscape Character

- 1.1.10 At a district level, the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment [Ref. A11.2-2] identifies Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). In total, 23 LCTs have been identified, which are further subdivided into 82 LCAs. The LCAs within the study area are presented in **ES Volume 3, Figure 11.4: Landscape Character [EN010157/APP/6.3]**.
- 1.1.11 This LVIA focuses on the LCAs rather than the LCTs; however landscape descriptions, characteristics, opportunities and strategy for the wider LCT, as recorded in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment, are referenced below with respect to each LCA.
- 1.1.12 All of Land Areas B-F are located within LCT 19: Open Farmland and specifically LCA 19D: Central Holderness Open Farmland, with the exception of Fields E13-E17 which are located within LCT 18: Low Lying Drained Farmland and

specifically LCA 18A: River Hull Corridor.

- 1.1.13 To the south-west of Land Areas B-F the grid connection cable route passes through LCA 18A: River Hull Corridor; LCA 18F: Figham and Swine Moor Common and LCA 16F: Beverley Parks Farmland. The grid connection cable route stops on the boundary of LCA 17B: North Cottingham Farmland.
- 1.1.14 Relevant extracts relating to East Riding of Yorkshire LCTs 16, 18 and 19 and East Riding of Yorkshire LCAs 16F, 18A, 18F and 19D are provided below.

LCT 16: Sloping Farmland

- 1.1.15 LCT 16 – Sloping Farmland is described in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment as being:

“...located along the eastern edge of the Yorkshire Wolds and extends from Driffield in the north to Beverley and Hull in the south. It includes the villages of Leconfield and Hutton Cranswick and the rural area between Hull and Beverley.”

- 1.1.16 The identified key characteristics of LCT 16 relevant to the Site and study area are:

- *“Intermittent scattered woodland blocks throughout*
- *Intensively farmed rectilinear arable fields of large to medium size interspersed with less regular early enclosure fields particularly around villages*
- *Free draining land with dispersed streams arising in the Wolds and flowing east to the River Hull*
- *Horticultural development between Beverley and Hull*
- *Views across the open landscape and views of Beverley Minster*
- *Hedgerow trees in places*
- *Scattered villages and farmsteads*
- *A number of turbine developments within the landscape with others visible beyond.”*

- 1.1.17 Under the heading of ‘Statement of Opportunities’ the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment includes the following relevant comments:

“Protect and enhance the rural character of the LCT and the characteristics that contribute to that character including agricultural land use, both arable and

pastoral.

Protecting the small number of drains, ditches or dykes in the area that are monastic in origin, by managing them in such a way as to preserve their historic and landscape value.

Protect and enhance woodland, in particular those with ancient woodland status to improve their biodiversity and heritage interest”

1.1.18 ‘Positive Landscape Features’ of LCT 16 are identified as follows:

- *“Undulating landform sloping down eastwards*
- *Small woodland blocks provide diversity*
- *Intact hedgerows and presence of hedgerow trees in places*
- *Small water courses both man-made and natural draining the agricultural land*
- *Varied field pattern of early and parliamentary enclosures*
- *Hedgerows that are species rich defining field boundaries*
- *Parkland characteristics in several pockets throughout the area*
- *Open views across the landscape.*
- *Numerous areas of designated woodland.”*

1.1.19 A discussion of ‘Condition and Strength of Character’ for LCT 16 notes that:

“There are a number of detractors in the Beverley Parks Farmland LCA including the large horticultural industry buildings, pylons and electricity substations between Hull and Beverley... However, generally this LCT on the edge of the Yorkshire Wolds has a strong sense of character resulting from landscape pattern, land use and settlement character.”

1.1.20 Under the heading of ‘Strategy’ for LCT 16, the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment includes the following comments:

“The strategy for this LCT is to maintain rural character including agricultural land use for either livestock or crops.

Promote the planting of hedgerows and gaps in existing hedgerows. Also promote the planting of hedgerow trees and woodland blocks to help integrate existing development and highlight the separation between Hull and Beverley. Consider views of the Minster and other landmarks such as churches when preparing planting proposals.

Discourage development that will introduce uncharacteristic built elements and potentially result in the loss of hedges, trees and field pattern that contribute to

local character.”

LCA 16F: Beverley Parks Farmland

1.1.21 The LCA is described in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment as follows:

“This LCA contains arable farmland and well scattered farmsteads, agricultural sheds and commercial buildings.

Development along the south edge of Beverley and the north edge of Hull is encroaching into the rural landscape that separates the two settlements. The area is well drained via a series of man-made and natural water courses.

Field pattern is quite irregular and blocks of woodland are present.”

LCT 18: Low Lying Drained Farmland

1.1.22 LCT 18 – Low Lying Drained Farmland is described in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment as being:

“...located in the floodplain of the River Hull and extends north to Driffield encompassing the low lying flat corridor landscape of Kelk Beck and Driffield Beck... The River Hull influences the landscape of the west of Holderness and flows in a north to south direction through this LCT. It is fed by numerous tributaries and man-made drains... Water is the unifying element of this landscape and it provides important habitats... The river corridor landscape is very sparsely wooded overall. However, there are pockets of plantations particularly around the reservoirs at Top Hill. Alder and willow carr woodland is the native woodland characteristic of the wetland corridor.”

1.1.23 The identified key characteristics of LCT 18 relevant to the Site and study area are:

- *“Flat, low lying flood plain generally below 10m AOD*
- *Sparse settlement in the floodplain. Farmsteads and villages concentrated on the edge of the flood plain*
- *Few crossing points on the River Hull contributing to low density of*

development between North Frodingham and Tickton

- *Pockets of fens and reed swamps indicating a former landscape.*
- *Sparse tree and woodland cover*
- *Rectilinear field systems with hedgerow and drainage ditch boundaries.*
- *A history of sand and gravel extraction*
- *River Hull and Beverley Barmston Drain are major watercourses with embankments*
- *Numerous water bodies particularly associated with gravel extraction*
- *Recreation associated with water bodies and the River Hull.*
- *Several medieval scheduled monuments.”*

1.1.24 Under the heading of ‘Statement of Opportunities’ the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment includes the following relevant comments:

“Protect and enhance the important wetland landscapes and water bodies including Hornsea Mere, reinforcing its ecological and landscape importance.

Protecting the small number of drains, ditches or dykes in the area that are monastic in origin, by managing them in such a way as to preserve their historic and landscape value.”

1.1.25 ‘Positive Landscape Features’ of LCT 18 are identified as follows:

- *“Flat low lying landscape*
- *Pockets of woodland cover dispersed along the corridor*
- *Ditches form many field boundaries with hedges concentrated on the marginally higher drier ground*
- *Largely rectilinear field pattern indicating parliamentary enclosure with pockets of early enclosure linked to settlement*
- *Linear drainage ditches such as Beverley Barmston Drain.*
- *Numerous high quality water bodies including Hornsea Mere SSSI/SPA (including Low Wood AW) and part of the River Hull Headwaters SSSI.*
- *Wet grassland and marsh habitats including Pulfin Bog and Tophill Low SSSIs.*
- *Low density of development/ settlement with relatively tranquil character.*
- *Overall good scenic quality.”*

1.1.26 A discussion of ‘Condition and Strength of Character’ for LCT 18 notes that:

“This intensively farmed landscape is fragmented in places. However, the water

courses through the LCT provide a unifying element in this generally attractive landscape that is remote in places and relatively tranquil. The influence of water courses on character diminishes with increased distances in the flat landscape. Water bodies become a more frequent element in the landscape as the landform drops towards the sea.”

- 1.1.27 Under the heading of ‘Strategy’ for LCT 18, the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment includes the following comments:

“The strategy for this LCT is to restrict new development to low density recreation and tourism schemes that respect the scale and pattern of the rural landscape. Local character should be reflected through appropriate use of materials, and sensitivity to landscape pattern. New building must respect local vernacular.

Woodland planting should be used to screen development rather than bunding which would introduce uncharacteristic landform.

Carr woodland is the characteristic woodland of this LCT. The dominant species are alder and willow. Woodland in drier areas includes ash, oak, field maple, birch and hazel. Promote the planting of hedgerows on field boundaries where they have been lost to reinforce local landscape pattern.

Promote the re-introduction of wetland habitats to increase landscape diversity and enhance landscape quality”

LCA 18A: River Hull Corridor

- 1.1.28 The LCA is described in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment as:

“A large LCA...it comprises low lying arable land prone to flooding and poor drainage. As a result there are pockets of wet grassland and marsh that remain in the area.

Field pattern is generally regular and field boundaries consist of field drains and in places hedgerows. There are few trees. Settlement and built form is limited north of Beverley but the river corridor south of Beverley is influenced by urban characteristics in places.

The recreational value of the area is the result of the navigation of the river, Public Rights of Way along the river banks, nature reserves with public access and the provision of facilities such as car parking and picnic sites. The River

Hull corridor is a tranquil and attractive area that attracts visitors.”

LCA 18F: Figham and Swine Moor

- 1.1.29 The LCA is described in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment as follows:

“This LCA is located on the east side of Beverley and covers two areas of common land that are pastures. They are located between Beverley and the River Hull. Swine Moor is to the north and Figham to the south. These areas have been managed as pasture since the middle ages although ridge and furrow remnants at Figham suggest the land was once cultivated.

There is a sewage works and industrial estate adjacent to Figham and Swine Moor has an industrial estate on its southern boundary. These two areas of land along with the Westwood have important historical significance that relates to land management and ownership since the middle ages. The area is located in the floodplain of the River Hull.”

LCT 19: Open Farmland

- 1.1.30 LCT 19 – Open Farmland is described in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment as:

“...covering a large area of farmland in the River Hull catchment... Landform is low level, gently undulating and hummocky in places influenced by erosion and deposited during the last Ice Age. There is little ground variation, ranging from approximately 0m to 40m AOD... The land is intensively farmed in irregular shaped fields that are medium to large... Larger villages in the area tend to be nucleated and the smaller villages more linear in form. The dispersed villages are linked by winding roads that fits in with irregular field pattern.”

- 1.1.31 The identified key characteristics of LCT 19: Open Farmland relevant to the Site and study area are:

- *“Gently undulating topography, hummocky in places.*
- *Very open landscape with few trees overall.*
- *Irregular field pattern of pre parliamentary enclosure.*
- *Dispersed villages linked by winding roads.*
- *Red brick buildings with pantile roofs sometimes painted white.*
- *Churches are often prominent features on the skyline.*
- *Irregular drainage pattern overall.*
- *Hedgerow field boundaries with few trees.*
- *Intensive farmed arable landscape.*
- *Large number of wide developments visible across the landscape both within LCT 19 and adjoining LCTs.”*

1.1.32 Under the heading of ‘Statement of Opportunities’ the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment includes the following relevant comment:

“Protect and enhance the characteristic field patterns within this LCT which make an important contribution to character and should be maintained and where possible reinforced”.

1.1.33 ‘Positive Landscape Features’ of LCT 19 are identified as follows:

- *“Gently undulating and hummocky landform.*
- *Farmed landscape of irregular early enclosure fields.*
- *Dispersed villages linked by winding roads.*
- *Red brick buildings with pantile roofs.*
- *Occasional cobble and limestone vernacular older buildings.*
- *Church landmark features.*
- *Historic buildings and designed landscapes present (e.g. Rise Park, Burton Constable and Burton Agnes).”*

1.1.34 An evaluation of LCT 19 notes that the character type continues to come under pressure from renewable energy development; however this is primarily in relation to wind farms; solar developments are not specifically mentioned.

1.1.35 A discussion of ‘Condition and Strength of Character’ for LCT 19 notes that:

“The loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees has resulted in a loss of landscape structure. Large flat arable areas are predominant in the area.”

1.1.36 Under the heading of ‘Strategy’ for LCT 19, the East Riding of Yorkshire

Landscape Character Assessment includes the following comments:

“The strategy for this LCT is to maintain and enhance the characteristics that contribute to its distinctiveness. Field pattern makes an important contribution to character and should be maintained and where possible reinforced. Promote hedgerow replanting and gapping up and discourage the further amalgamation of fields...

Views of landmark features and sites should be protected...

Native and locally characteristic woodland and tree planting will help to reinforce landscape pattern and add diversity to the landscape.”

LCA 19D: Central Holderness Open Farmland

1.1.37 The LCA is described in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment as follows:

“This LCA surrounds the two parkland landscapes of Rise and Burton Constable. The LCA includes the villages of Leven, Routh, Long Ritson, Great Hatfield, Witherneck, Skirlaugh, Ellerby, West Newton, Sproatly and Humberton plus numerous hamlets...

Agricultural intensification within the River Hull floodplain means that, as with the other parts of Holderness, woodland is scarce. The small blocks of semi natural woodland present are composed of tree species such as ash, oak, hazel, hawthorn, elm, field maple and rowan. In wetter areas alder and various willows are found...

As with neighbouring LCA's the land use consists of open agricultural land, mainly arable, with generally large fields and little woodland. Settlements are well scattered, numerous and varied in size. Farmsteads are common and field pattern comprises large rectilinear fields bordered by hedgerows and tracks.

This is a large scale landscape with a gently undulating landform. Panoramic views to the east coast and the neighbouring Wolds, to the north west, are available from this LCA.”

References

- **Ref. A11.2-1:** National Character Area (NCA) Profile 40: Holderness (2015) Natural England. Available online at <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/8569014>
- **Ref. A11.2-2:** East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment (2018) AECOM on behalf of East Riding of Yorkshire Council. Available online at <https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/planning-permission-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-the-local-plan/landscape-character-assessment/>

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