Light Valley Solar

Environmental Statement Volume 3

Appendix 10.2: Landscape Baseline and Effects

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Appendix 10.2: Landscape Baseline and Effects

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1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Appendix to the Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.10**], sets out detailed baseline descriptions for the Solar Development Sites and Landscape Character Areas (LCA) scoped into this assessment as published by Selby District Council. The geographical extent of landscape character receptors is shown in Figure 10.3.1: North Yorkshire Published Landscape Character Areas (ES Volume 2) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.10.03.01]** and Figure 10.3.2: Selby District Published Landscape Character Areas (ES Volume 2) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.10.03.02**].

1.1.2 Detailed descriptions of the likely impacts and likely significance of effects of Proposed Development on landscape receptors during construction, at year 1 of operation, and at year 15 of operation, are also provided using the methodology set out in Appendix 10.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology (ES Volume 3) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.03.10.01**].

1.1.3 The assessment of tranquillity within the Study Area is based on the CPRE tranquillity mapping methodology and its established factors (Ref 1). Tranquility mapping is shown in Figure 10.7: Tranquility (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.10.07]**.

1.1.4 The assessment of baseline conditions and the evaluation of effects on vegetation have been directly informed by the findings of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA). The AIA, provided as Appendix 16.2 (ES Volume 3) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.03.16.02]**, includes detailed arboricultural surveys that record the extent, type, and condition of trees and hedgerows within and surrounding the Order Limits. This information has been used to identify key landscape features and underpin the assessment of likely effects and mitigation measures relating to vegetation loss, retention, and protection.

2 Baseline and effects assessment

2.1 Solar Development Site 1

Table 2-1 Solar Development Site 1 - Baseline

Hierarchy	**National Character Area**		**County Character Area**		**District Character Area**	
n/a	Vale of York (NCA 28) and Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)		Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland (LCT 28)		LCA 2: York Fringe East and LCA 3: Skipwith Lowlands	
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**					
Defined by the Applicant	Solar Development Site 1					
Summary	**Determining the value attached to the landscape**					
The main current land use is agricultural with arable fields. Farm holdings adjacent to this site include Tileshed Farm, Manor Farm and Mount Pleasant Farm. Three Public Rights of Way (PRoW) cross Solar Development Site 1. A medium scale patchwork of fields defined by hedgerows with occasional mature hedgerow trees.	**Landscape designations**	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
	None	Ancient Woodland adjacent at the eastern boundary.	Intensively farmed landscape without environmental designations, good network of hedgerows.	Solar Development Site 1 largely represents an extensively drained and enclosed landscape with little cultural heritage.	Generally, in mixed condition with some well-maintained fences and intact hedgerows but also some localised areas with hedgerow loss arising from intensive farming or development.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.
Key characteristics	**Distinctiveness**	**Recreational**	**Tourism**	**Perceptual (scenic)**	**Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)**	**Functional**
▪ Predominantly arable farmland with adjacent to Solar Development Site 1 scattered woodland blocks (e.g., Millfield Plantation, Partridge Remise, Easterby's Plantation, Pallion Wood, Gray Reins). ▪ Slight elevation in the north, transitioning to flat terrain in the south. ▪ Network of hedgerows with wet ditches and grass margins; includes mature and veteran hedgerow trees, mainly oak, plus occasional field maple and willow. Occasional ash affected by dieback. ▪ Veteran and potential veteran trees; ▪ Hedges predominantly hawthorn and blackthorn; thick continuous hedges mixed with thin and gappy hedges.	Strong rural but unexceptional character dominated by predominantly arable farmland, interspersed with adjacent woodlands.	Good network of PRoW, used primarily for local recreation.	Not associated with tourism.	Limited wider panoramic views are available from the higher ground in the north of Solar Development Site 1 south of Wheldrake Lane, but most of the Site is visually contained and enclosed by mature trees, hedgerows and adjacent to the Solar Development Site 1 woodland, which provide distinctive features in views across the relatively flat landscape.	The strongly rural character of Solar Development Site 1 is generally quiet. Positive factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: ▪ Openness of the landscape (freedom from development) ▪ Trees in landscape. These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: ▪ The visibility and noise from Skipworth Road, on the west side of the Site.	Farmland ditches contribute to natural floodplains, for example the Pallion Dike on the eastern boundary. Woodland provides valuable habitats and cover.

	Value attached to the landscape		Valued landscape	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity	
	Medium		No	Medium	Medium	
	Solar Development Site 1 contains no landscape or environmental designations, or heritage assets, however Ancient woodland (Gilbertson's Wood) is adjacent to the eastern boundary. Solar Development Site 1 is an intensively farmed landscape, albeit of a medium scale and with adjacent woodland and mature trees contributing more strongly to the character in some areas. Scenic quality is limited, and views are often curtailed by vegetation in the flat landscape, with hedgerows and woodland restricting longer vistas. There is good access overall.			The generally strong hedgerow framework and adjacent woodland plantation has some ability to accommodate the lower parts of the Proposed Development into the landscape, particularly in areas less open to views.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of medium value attached to the landscape and medium susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-2 Solar Development Site 1 - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic and machinery movement, temporary lighting, hoarding and material storage, will change the rural character and reduce openness across the Site. This will include the proposed 275 kV substation in Field 1.19 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**, coupled with the presence of construction machinery. Construction will temporarily reduce tranquillity through noise, short-term site lighting, and traffic entering from Skipwith Road and Wheldrake Lane. Two hedgerows will be removed in the south for the creation of the Bird Mitigation Area. All other hedgerows will be retained, with only short sections (<10 m) removed for access tracks. Existing woodlands will remain, and works will be set back from Wheldrake Lane, limiting changes to landscape features and reducing overall impact magnitude. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Two potentially Important Hedgerows as detailed in Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.08**]) will be retained in full length. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Works will be short term and impacts reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Changes will arise in landscape character across Solar Development Site 1 due to the permanent introduction of solar panels and the 275 kV substation in Field 1.19 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**. The proposed panels and infrastructure will be set within a retained framework of existing hedgerows and woodland. The existing field pattern and drainage channels will be retained. Works will also be substantially set back from Wheldrake Lane. As shown on Figure 2.1: Illustrative Site Layout Plan (ES Volume 2) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.01**]] substantial area in the southern part of Solar Development Site 1 will not be used of a solar development and instead be dedicated to the new Bird Mitigation Area with the principal objective of supporting wintering non-breeding birds. Consequently, the change to the existing landscape features and patterns will be limited and this will minimise the magnitude of impact overall. New planting along field boundaries will not yet have established. The presence of the solar panels and substation in the rural landscape of Solar Development Site 1 will reduce the relative tranquillity.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
Medium	Minor adverse
Species rich grassland will have fully established beneath the solar panels. New woodland blocks, tree and hedgerow planting on field boundaries, landscape offsets and hedgerow reinforcements will have established reducing the perceived scale of the Proposed Development and reducing the magnitude of impact overall.	The medium magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during Year 15 of operation, which is not significant. These effects are considered

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
The reduction in tranquillity due to the presence of the solar panels and substation will be partly offset by new planting, new woodland and the large new Bird Mitigation Area taking up the southern part of the Site.	adverse due to the introduction of industrial elements into a previously agricultural landscape, although the significance of effects will be reduced to minor by the successful establishment of mitigation planting.

2.2 Solar Development Site 2

Table 2-3 Solar Development Site 2 - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area		County Character Area		District Character Area	
n/a	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)		Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)		LCA 11: Sherburn Farmland	
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**					
Defined by the Applicant	Solar Development Site 2					
Summary	**Determining the value attached to the landscape**					
The Site comprises four large rectangular fields south of Fryston Common Lane and a small field parcel to the north. It is predominantly used for arable agriculture, with an existing access track running down the centre and is also surrounded by agricultural fields. Siddle Farm House, Fryston Common Farm and Oak Tree Farm buildings lie adjacent or near to the site boundary. There are no PRoWs within the site. Flat, low-lying and open arable farmland with little tree cover and few hedgerows.	**Landscape designations**	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
	None	None	Intensively farmed landscape with relatively few natural features apart from isolated locally woodland, trees and hedgerows on the boundary of Solar Development Site 2.	Most of Solar Development Site 2 has been heavily drained and enclosed with high levels of boundary loss which has resulted in the large-scale fields present today. There is little cultural heritage.	Low condition overall, arising from intensive farming practices, with few natural features and loss of hedgerow structure across much of Site.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.
Key characteristics	**Distinctiveness**	**Recreational**	**Tourism**	**Perceptual (scenic)**	**Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)**	**Functional**

▪ Flat, low lying large scaled arable farmland typically defined by ditches, with small number of grassland margins. Causeway Dike is main ditch on southern boundary. ▪ An open track crosses the middle of the Site in a north to south direction. ▪ Little tree cover nor strong hedgerow field boundaries across most of the site. ▪ The northern boundary is mostly open, with a small group of young oaks and a nearby poplar plantation east of Siddle Farm House. The eastern boundary has scattered hedge trees and short remnant hedges. ▪ The southern roadside boundary features ash affected by dieback. The western boundary includes a shelterbelt of mature oak, hawthorn, hazel, and blackthorn. The small parcel north of the road is bordered by discontinuous hedges, with oak, ash, willow, and a notable goat willow near the entrance.	Indistinct character overall, dominated by flat low-lying open farmland with little tree cover and few hedgerows. The busy A63 further erodes the sense of place.	No PRoW access within Solar Development Site 2.	Not associated with tourism.	Extensive open views, over the flat landscape provide a strong sense of openness with the A63 and some low voltage overhead lines, which are conspicuous.	Strong agricultural character but heavily eroded by the influence of the A63. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: ▪ Openness of the landscape (freedom from development). These are offset to a large degree by negative factors: ▪ The visibility and noise from A63, on the southern side of Solar Development Site 2. ▪ Signs of human impact in terms of overhead power lines.	Solar Development Site 2 is predominantly agricultural with a poor contribution to natural systems or green infrastructure networks.
	Value attached to the landscape		**Valued landscape**	**Susceptibility to change**	**Sensitivity**	
	Low		No	Low	Low	
	Solar Development Site 2 contains no landscape, heritage or environmental designations and represents an intensively farmed landscape. Strong rural character but influenced by high voltage pylons to the south of the site. There is no PRoW access.			Large scale arable farmland with degraded condition, weak sense of place and low susceptibility to change overall.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of low value attached to the landscape and low susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-4 Solar Development Site 2 – Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	**Significance of effect**
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic and machinery movement, temporary lighting and material storage, will change the rural character and reduce openness across the Site. This will include the construction of 275 kV substation and BESS in Field 2.4 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**, coupled with the presence of construction machinery. There are a lack of landscape features within the Site but features on the Site boundary will be retained. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Changes will also occur due to construction traffic entering the Site from the A63. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity. Noise for short periods and temporary site lighting for construction in hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity within the vicinity of the Site, albeit with the existing influence of the A63. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to an overall lack of physical features such as strong boundary hedgerows to assist in integrating the Proposed Development within the landscape.
Year 1 operation (winter)	

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
The permanent installation of solar panels, along with the proposed 275 kV substation and BESS at Field 2.4 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]** , will result in a noticeable change to the landscape character and a reduction in openness across Solar Development Site 2. New planting along field boundaries and within offsets will not yet have established, and the current lack of existing field boundaries means these changes will be visible throughout the site. The introduction of solar panels and associated infrastructure will break up the previously open, arable landscape, introducing built elements into views that were once uninterrupted. This will alter the visual experience across the whole of Solar Development Site 2, diminishing the sense of rural tranquillity and creating a more developed appearance until the proposed planting matures and begins to integrate the Proposed Development into its surroundings.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
New planting along field boundaries and within offsets will have established creating a new landscape structure which will reduce landscape impacts of the solar panels and strengthen the existing green infrastructure network. The reduction in tranquillity due to the presence of the solar panels, BESS and substation will be partly offset by new planting and habitat creation within a new landscape structure. However, the change from the open, arable landscape to more enclosed and new built elements across the Site will remain.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is significant.

2.3 Solar Development Site 3

Table 2-5 Solar Development Site 3 - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area		County Character Area		District Character Area	
n/a	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)		Levels Farmland (LCT 23)		LCA 13: Haddlesey Farmland	
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**					
Defined by the Applicant	Solar Development Site 3					
Summary	**Determining the value attached to the landscape**					
Solar Development Site 3 is located approximately 0.5 km east of the village of Hillam. Hillam Common Lane runs along the northern perimeter of the site with Woodlands Lane running along the south. The area is used for agricultural land and there are no PRoWs within the site. Flat, low lying arable farmland amongst a patchwork of medium scaled fields.	**Landscape designations**	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
	None	None	Intensively farmed landscape with tree lined boundaries providing some natural features of value.	Most of the landscape is heavily farmed and drained with little cultural heritage.	Low condition overall, arising from intensive farming practices, with only tree lined ditches providing some value.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.
Key characteristics	**Distinctiveness**	**Recreational**	**Tourism**	**Perceptual (scenic)**	**Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)**	**Functional**

▪ Largely comprising two flat, low lying arable fields of medium scale bordered by deep ditches with occasional oak and ash. ▪ Short lengths of remnant hedges of hawthorn and hazel are scattered around the boundaries. ▪ Maspin Moor Drain runs through the site in an east-west direction.	Flat low-lying predominantly arable farmland but with some boundary vegetation but indistinct overall.	No PRoW access within Solar Development Site 3.	Not associated with tourism.	Medium scale fields of Solar Development Site 3 provide some enclosure in the otherwise flat landscape and curtail views to the middle distance. Pylons and overheard power lines appear to the south.	Strong rural character eroded by overhead power lines. Generally Solar Development Site 3 is quiet, apart from the influence of some traffic on Hillam Common Lane. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: ▪ Openness of the landscape (freedom from development) These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: ▪ The visibility and noise from Hillam Common Lane, on the west side of the Site. ▪ Signs of human impact in terms of overhead power lines and pylons.	Area predominantly agricultural, but making some contribution to the floodplain.
	Value attached to the landscape		**Valued landscape**	**Susceptibility to change**	**Sensitivity**	
	Low		No	Low	Low	
	Solar Development Site 3 contains no landscape, heritage or environmental designations and represents an intensively farmed landscape. Strong rural character but eroded by overhead power lines, pylons and the adjacent road.			Medium scale arable farmland with indistinct sense of place, has low susceptibility to change overall.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of the low value attached to the landscape and the low susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-6 Solar Development Site 3 – Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic arriving from the north and machinery movement, temporary lighting and material storage, will change the rural character and reduce openness across the Site. Works will be set back from the drains and the road, existing trees within Solar Development Site 3 will be retained and will help to minimise the magnitude of impact. Boundary trees will also be retained. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Construction will cause noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction in hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity within the vicinity of the Site. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to an overall lack of physical features such as strong boundary hedgerows to assist in integrating the Proposed Development within the landscape and the scale of proposed activities.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Change to landscape character and loss of openness due to long-term installation of solar panels with associated infrastructure and fencing across Solar Development Site 3. New planting along field boundaries and within offsets will not yet have established. The presence of the solar panels will introduce structures into the landscape and the general tranquillity of the Site will reduce.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during Year 1, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to an overall lack of physical features such as strong boundary hedgerows to assist in integrating the Proposed Development within the landscape and the scale of proposed activities.

Magnitude of impact Year 15 operation (summer)	Significance of effect
Medium	Minor adverse
New and reinforced hedgerow and meadow planting along field boundaries and within offsets will have established creating a new landscape structure which will help to reduce landscape impacts Together this will reduce the perceived scale of the Proposed Development and help minimise landscapes impact in the long term. The reduction in tranquillity due to the presence of the solar panels and substation will be partly offset by new planting and habitat creation, changing the landscape character of the Site from open and agricultural to more naturalistic and enclosed by mature hedgerows and trees. The reduction of openness will remain.	The medium magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is not significant. The significance of effects will be reduced due to the successful establishment of mitigation planting.

2.4 Solar Development Site 4

Table 2-7 Solar Development Site 4 - Baseline

Hierarchy	**National Character Area**			**County Character Area**	**District Character Area**	
n/a	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)			Levels Farmland (LCT 23)	LCA 13: Haddlesey Farmland	
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**					
Defined by the Applicant	Solar Development Site 4					
Summary	**Determining the value attached to the landscape**					
Solar Development Site 4 is located within agricultural fields and crossed by Haddlesey Road and Roe Lane. Bowers House Farm is adjacent to the site, as is Woodhouse Farm. The River Aire runs approximately 450 m south from the southern boundary and Gateforth Common and Gateforth Wood is located adjacent to the northern boundary. There are three PRoW within the site. Flat, low lying arable farmland arranged in a patchwork of large fields, with only sporadic vegetation, creating a vast open character.	**Landscape designations**	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
	None	None	This is an intensively farmed landscape with very few natural features or tree cover.	Most of the landscape is heavily farmed and drained and there is little cultural heritage.	Poor condition overall, arising from intensive farming practices, with loss of hedgerow structure across much of area and few natural features.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.
Key characteristics	**Distinctiveness**	**Recreational**	**Tourism**	**Perceptual (scenic)**	**Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)**	**Functional**
▪ Flat arable farmland, fields of large scale typically defined by wet ditches, some grassland margins and only occasional trees and sporadic hedgerows, ▪ Small pockets of boundary trees of oak, sweet chestnut, poplar and sycamore are dotted around the boundaries. ▪ There are several watercourses and unnamed watercourses present in and around the site, including Moor Drain, Maspin Moor Drain, Mearley Drain and Fleet Drain.	Flat low-lying predominantly arable farmland with limited vegetation and fields defined by dikes or ditches.	There are three PRoW used for local recreation. There is limited east-west access across Solar Development Site 4.	Not associated with tourism.	Extensive open views over the flat landscape provide a strong sense of openness. Skylines are frequently indistinct with limited vegetation, often featuring pylons.	Strong rural character but tranquillity is eroded by many overhead power lines. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: ▪ Openness of the landscape (freedom from development) These are offset to a large degree by negative factors: ▪ Signs of human impact in terms of major overhead power line.	Area predominantly agricultural with generally poor contribution to natural systems or green infrastructure networks.
	Value attached to the landscape		**Valued landscape**	**Susceptibility to change**	**Sensitivity**	
	Low		No	Low	Low	
	Solar Development Site 4 contains no landscape, heritage or environmental designations and represents a heavily drained and intensively farmed landscape. Although there is some public access, there is little landscape structure and overall low value attached to the landscape.			Very open nature of Solar Development Site 4 may mean that solar farm development could be exposed, but due to degraded condition and weak sense of place, it has low susceptibility to change overall.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of low value attached to the landscape and low susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-8 Solar Development Site 4 – Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic arriving from south and west and machinery movement, temporary lighting and material storage, will change the rural character and reduce openness across the Site. This will include the proposed 275 kV substation on Field 4.4 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**, coupled with the presence of construction machinery. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity including noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction in hours of darkness within the vicinity of the Site. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to an overall lack of physical features such as strong boundary hedgerows to assist in integrating the Proposed Development within the landscape.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
There will be changes to landscape character and loss of openness due to long-term installation of solar panels with associated infrastructure and fencing, and the proposed 275 kV substation at Field 4.4 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**, across large area of Solar Development Site 4. New planting along field boundaries, PRoW and within offsets will not yet have established. There is a lack of landscape features within the Site to offset the magnitude of impact. The presence of the solar panels and substation will change the landscape character and the general tranquillity of the Site will reduce.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to an overall lack of physical features such as strong boundary hedgerows to assist in integrating the Proposed Development within the landscape.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
Medium	Minor adverse
New and reinforced hedgerow and meadow planting along field boundaries, PRoW and within offsets will have established creating a new landscape structure which will help to reduce landscape impacts. The woodland belts and woodland block planted around the substation and close to Birkin House will create new natural features within the Site. The reduction in tranquillity due to the presence of the solar panels and substation will be partly offset by new planting and habitat creation, changing the landscape character of the Site from open and agricultural to more natural and enclosed, defined by mature hedgerows, trees and woodland. The reduction of openness will remain.	The medium magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is not significant.

2.5 Solar Development Sites 6 and 7

Table 2-9 Solar Development Sites 6 and 7 - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
n/a	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	Levels Farmland (LCT 23)	LCA 11: Sherburn Farmland
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Defined by the Applicant	Solar Development Sites 6 and 7		

Summary	Determining the value attached to the landscape					
	Landscape designations	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
Solar Development Site 6 is bordered to the rail lines to the north and west (Hull railway, Normanton and Colton Junction railway line, Milford Sidings), with Common Lane bisecting its fields to the east. Solar Development Site 7 lies immediately north of Common Lane also surrounded by rail lines. The prevailing land use is agricultural, characterised by medium to large-scale arable fields. The landscape is flat and low-lying, defined by drainage ditches and sporadically spaced trees. Milford Common Drain and Lumby Common Drain traverse Solar Development Site 6. Industrial influences are present due to proximity to railway infrastructure, the former Gascoigne Wood Mine immediately north and Maltings Waste Processing plant.	None	None	Intensively farmed landscape with relatively few natural features within both Sites 6 and 7, apart from some low hedgerows and isolated field trees.	Sites 6 and 7 largely represent an extensively drained and enclosed landscape. There is little cultural heritage within these sites.	Low condition overall in both Sites 6 and 7, arising from intensive farming practices, but some hedgerows and tree lines have been retained.	No strong cultural associations in either Solar Development Site 6 or 7 relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional
▪ Flat, low lying arable farmland typically defined by ditches and some sporadic trees on field boundaries. ▪ Vegetation includes dispersed broadleaved tree belts, primarily surrounding on the perimeter of the sites. ▪ Discontinuous hedges of predominantly hawthorn and elm of low quality. ▪ Sense of enclosure provided by raised rail lines to the north and west. ▪ Young trees sporadically planted along the northern and western boundary.	Rural but unexceptional character dominated by predominantly arable farmland with some hedgerows.	Some local access through PRoW along Turpin Lane, adjacent to Milford Common.	Not associated with tourism.	Both Solar Development Site 6 and 7 are characterised by open views, but these are largely contained by mature trees, hedgerows and some woodland beyond the Sites, such as wooded hill adjacent to Gascoigne Wood mine, a notable landform which is visible on the skyline.	Whilst the eastern parts of Solar Development Site 6 are more tranquil, the industrial skyline, railway lines and lighting in the west results in a reduction in perceived tranquillity to the west and Solar Development Site 7. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: ▪ Openness of the landscape (freedom from development). These are offset by negative factors: ▪ Signs of human impact in terms of industry and railway lines concentrated at the northern and western boundaries.	Farmland ditches contribute to natural floodplains, for example Milford Common Drain. Woodland at Gascoigne Hill Mine on northern boundary of Solar Development Site 6 provides habitat.

Hierarchy	National Character Area Value attached to the landscape	County Character Area Valued landscape	Susceptibility to change	District Character Area Sensitivity
	Low	No	Medium	Low
	Neither Solar Development Site 6 or 7 contain landscape, heritage or environmental designations, and both represent a heavily drained and intensively farmed landscape. Although there is some public access, there is little landscape structure within both Sites and overall, the value attached to the landscape of both is low.		The medium scale hedgerow framework and railways enclosure, confers some ability to accommodate the lower parts of the Proposed Development into the landscape.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of low value attached to the landscape and medium susceptibility to change.

Table 2-10 Solar Development Sites 6 and 7 – Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic and machinery movement, temporary lighting and material storage, will change the rural character and reduce openness across the Sites. Works will be set back within both Sites 6 and 7 from retained hedgerows and trees to reduce the magnitude of impact. Only short lengths of two hedges will also be removed, in both cases to accommodate the access tracks. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. One potentially Important Hedgerow as identified in Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.08**]), will be retained with only short section up to 10 m removed for access. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Changes will also occur due to construction traffic arriving from Common Lane. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity, including noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction in hours of darkness. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to the scale of proposed activities across the landscape receptor.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
The permanent installation of solar panels introduces a regular pattern of engineered structures, resulting in a notable change to landscape character and a reduction in perceived openness. At Year 1, mitigation through boundary and planting within offsets remains visually ineffective due to limited establishment. The loss of open field patterns and the introduction of built form diminish perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, particularly in western Solar Development Site 6 and around Solar Development Site 7, where existing infrastructure (rail corridors, industry) already compromises baseline conditions. These effects will be most pronounced in the western parts of Solar Development Site 6 and around Solar Development Site 7, where rail corridors and nearby industry enclose the area. Overall, the landscape becomes less tranquil and less distinctly rural.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to the scale of proposed activities across the landscape receptor.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
New planting along field boundaries and within offsets will have established and created a framework of planting with retained boundary trees and vegetation, reducing the perceived scale of the Proposed Development which will help minimise landscape impact in the long term. The reduction in tranquillity due to the presence of the solar panels will be partly offset by new planting and habitat creation, changing the landscape character of the Site from open and agricultural to more natural and enclosed,	The medium magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to the scale of proposed activities across the landscape receptor and persistent loss of openness.

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
defined by mature hedgerows along the perimeter of the sites and along PRoW, trees and woodland near residential buildings. The reduction of openness will remain.	

2.6 Solar Development Site 8

Table 2-11 Solar Development Site 8 - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
n/a	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	Levels Farmland (LCT 23)	LCA 11: Sherburn Farmland
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Defined by the Applicant	Solar Development Site 8		

Summary	Determining the value attached to the landscape					
	Landscape designations	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
Solar Development Site 8 comprises of large-scale arable fields. The southern edge of the site runs adjacent to the Hull railway line. Philip Lane runs adjacent to the eastern edge of the site. Habholme Dike runs adjacent to the western edge of the Site and an unnamed drain runs to the east of the Site. PRoWs run along the eastern and western boundaries.	None	None	Intensively farmed landscape without environmental designations and with relatively few natural features within Site.	Solar Development Site 8 largely represents an extensively drained and enclosed landscape. There is little cultural heritage.	Low condition overall, arising from intensive farming practices.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional
▪ Largely comprises two flat, low lying, large scaled arable fields typically defined by ditches with virtually no trees. ▪ Woodland at Gascoigne Wood Mine beyond the western boundary influences the landscape character to the west, creating a more enclosed and vegetated edge. ▪ A blackthorn hedge and thicket in the northeastern corner.	Rural but unexceptional character dominated by predominantly arable farmland.	Good local access via PRoW on eastern and western boundaries of the site.	Not associated with tourism.	There are open views although visually contained in the west by the presence of woodland adjacent to Gascoigne Wood Mine to the west and in the north by Bishop Wood, both beyond the Site.	Solar Development Site 8 is reasonably tranquil. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include: ▪ openness of the landscape (freedom from development) ▪ areas of low noise. These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: ▪ signs of human impact in terms of and railway line to south.	Farmland ditches contribute to natural floodplains, for example Habholme Dike on western boundary. Woodland at Gascoigne Hill Mine on western boundary of Solar Development Site 8 provides habitat.

	Value attached to the landscape		Valued landscape	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity	
	Low		No	Medium	Low	

	Solar Development Site 8 contains no landscape, heritage or environmental designations and represents a heavily drained and intensively farmed landscape. Although there is some public access along its boundaries, there is little landscape structure within the Site and overall low value attached to the landscape.	The presence of woodland beyond Solar Development Site 8, confers some ability to accommodate the lower parts of the Proposed Development into the landscape.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of low value attached to the landscape and medium susceptibility to change.

Table 2-12 Solar Development Site 8 – Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic and machinery movement, temporary lighting and material storage, will change the rural character and reduce openness across the Site. Changes will also occur due to construction traffic accessing the site. There are a lack of landscape features within Solar Development Site 8 to offset the magnitude of impact. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction in hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity within the vicinity of the Site. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to an overall lack of physical features such as strong boundary hedgerows to assist in integrating the Proposed Development within the landscape.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Changes will arise in landscape character and loss of openness due to long-term installation of solar panels with associated infrastructure, fencing and associated equipment. There is a lack of existing landscape features within Solar Development Site 8 to offset the magnitude of impact and new planting along field boundaries and within offsets will not yet have established. The presence of the solar panels will introduce structures into the landscape and the general tranquillity of the Site will reduce.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is significant. The higher significance of effect is due to an overall lack of physical features such as strong boundary hedgerows to assist in integrating the Proposed Development within the landscape.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
Medium	Minor adverse
New planting along field boundaries and within offsets will have established creating a new landscape structure which will help to reduce landscape impacts. The reduction in tranquillity due to the presence of the solar panels and substation will be partly offset by new planting and habitat creation. The reduction of openness will remain.	The medium magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is not significant.

2.7 LCA 2: York Fringe East

Table 2-13 LCA 2: York Fringe East - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
District	Vale of York (NCA 28)	Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland (LCT 28)	LCA 2: York Fringe East
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Solar Development Site 1 (Northern edge)		

Summary	Determining the value attached to the landscape					
	Landscape designations	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
The area is defined by the Escrick Moraine, a glacial ridge that runs north-east to south-west and meets the River Ouse. This landform creates a gently rolling topography, with elevations typically between 15 and 25 metres, which rise above the lower levels to the south. The soils overlying the moraine are highly fertile and support intensive arable farming. Fields are medium to large in scale, generally irregular in pattern, and enclosed by mature hedgerows or post and wire fencing. Mixed woodlands are scattered across the area and are often associated with historic estates. Stillingfleet Beck is a small watercourse that flows westward from Wheldrake to the River Ouse, contributing to the area's hydrological character. Settlement is sparse and includes two nucleated villages, Escrick and Stillingfleet, along with scattered farms. Both villages contain Conservation Areas and a range of Grade I, Grade II and Grade II* Listed Buildings. Notable heritage assets include Moreby Hall and Escrick Park. Moreby Hall is set within extensive grounds that are designated as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. The village of Escrick is served by the A19 and Stillingfleet by the B1222. Minor roads connect farms to the villages and larger routes. The Trans Pennine Trail, a national cycle and walking route, runs north to south through the centre of the area on a disused railway line. Public Rights of Way are more prevalent around Stillingfleet than Escrick. Long outward views are available from higher ground, particularly to the south, which contributes to a strong sense of openness. Combined with low population density and minimal noise, the area retains a rural and tranquil character.	None	Escrick Conservation Area, Escrick Historic Park, Stillingfleet Conservation Area Moreby Hall Registered Park and Gardens Several Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)	This is an intensively farmed landscape, although locally important waterbodies and woodlands are positive landscape elements. Particularly, large areas of woodland to the north, for example Spring Wood, contribute to the character of the landscape.	There is a great sense of time-depth in this landscape, particularly within the settlements of Stillingfleet and Escrick which feature Conservation Areas and numerous Listed Buildings. The historic houses of Moreby Hall and Escrick Park and their associated parklands are locally valued, especially the Moreby Hall grounds which are designated as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. Parts of the landscape have been drained and enclosed as recently as the 20th century. There are also localised areas of medieval strip fields, near Escrick.	Generally, in good condition with well-maintained field boundaries and intact hedgerows. Medium to large scale field pattern, with some historic loss of hedgerows and field trees. Parkland is generally in good condition.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional
Gently rolling, predominantly arable farmland with areas of woodland plantation distributed throughout the area. Strong rural character with small, nucleated villages and farmsteads. Strong sense of openness resulting from long distance views across the landscape. A medium scale patchwork of fields defined by hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees, and post and wire fencing. Parklands associated with large historic houses.	Strong, rural character with small villages and predominantly arable farmland, interspersed with woodland plantations. Locally distinct landform of moraine.	There is a network of PRoW, used primarily for local recreation. National Cycle Network Route 65, part of the Trans Pennine Trail, crosses the centre of the area. This provides extensive foot and bike, and in some parts horse access through the Pennines and from coast to coast.	Trans Pennine trail, a long-distance route crossed the centre of the area.	Some long outward views are available from the higher ground within the area, particularly to the south of the character area and create a strong sense of openness. Woodland provides distinctive landscape features in many views.	Strong rural character, with little evidence of human influence across this area, with only relatively isolated settlements and development. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: - Openness of the landscape (freedom from development) - Perceived naturalness of the landscape - Areas of low noise. These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: - Visibility and noise due to the A19.	Farmland ditches contribute to natural floodplains related to the River Derwent in the east and River Ouse in the west. Woodland provides valuable habitats and cover.

Summary of key landscape features	Value attached to the landscape		Valued landscape	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity	
Predominantly arable farmland with areas of woodland plantation distributed throughout the area. Relatively elevated topography. Hedgerows at field boundaries, woodland and mature trees associated with estate parks.	Medium		No	Medium	Medium	
	LCA 2 contains no landscape designations but several other environmental and heritage designations, including Escrick historic park and garden. The majority of the area comprises an intensively farmed landscape but with woodland contributing strongly to the character in some areas. Some sense of cultural value within villages and historic parklands. No outstanding scenic quality but some long views from higher ground provide sense of openness. Overall there is a strong rural character.			The large-scale landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited new development, particularly in areas which are more wooded and semi-enclosed by hedgerows, which are less open to views. Changes to the appearance or development on the higher ground, will be potentially widely seen and is more susceptible to change.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of medium value attached to the landscape and medium susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-14 LCA 2: York Fringe East - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
Very low	Minor adverse
Construction activities such as ground preparation, machinery movement, temporary lighting, material storage and construction traffic (travelling from A19 along Wheldrake Lane) will change the rural character and reduce openness across a very small part of the south-eastern edge of the LCA, within northern part of the Solar Development Site 1. Most hedgerows will be retained, with one short section (<10 m) and tree hedgerow trees removed for access tracks and for construction access. Existing woodlands around this section of the Site will remain, and works will be set back from Wheldrake Lane, limiting changes to landscape features and reducing overall impact magnitude. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction during hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity at the south-eastern edge of the LCA and along Wheldrake Lane. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The very low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during construction, across a small part of the LCA., which is not significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Very low	Minor adverse
There will be a localised change to landscape character resulting from the loss of openness due to permanent introduction of solar panels in south-eastern edge of the LCA. This will be limited by offsets from the roads, retained surrounding woodland and hedgerows. The character of the majority of the LCA will not be affected.	The very low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor effects during year 1 of operation, which is not significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
Very Low	Negligible adverse
By year 15 of operation, there will be a barely perceptible change to landscape character as the reinstated vegetation will have matured and the proposed hedgerow planting will have established to strengthen field boundaries and further enclose the fields where solar panels will be located.	The very low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in negligible adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is not significant. The significance of effects will be reduced due to the successful establishment of mitigation planting.

2.8 LCA 3: Skipwith Lowlands

Table 2-15 LCA 3: Skipwith Lowlands - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
District	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland (LCT 28)	LCA 3: Skipwith Lowlands
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Solar Development Site 1 (Main part of the Site excluding northern fringe in LCA 2) and CRC 1-4		

Summary	Determining the value attached to the landscape					
	Landscape designations	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
The topography of LCA 3: Skipwith Lowlands is generally flat or very gently undulating in parts, with glacial drift deposits over pebbly sandstone producing poorly drained soils. The west, especially the River Ouse floodplain, is notably level, rarely exceeding 10 mAOD. Tributary rivers cross the area, joining the Ouse and Derwent. Agriculture dominates, mostly arable with semi-enclosed, medium-large, irregular fields bordered by low hedgerows or ditches. A scattered pattern of blocks of woodland which reflects the poor quality of the soils for extensive farming is notable. Scattered woodland blocks reflect poor soil quality. Skipwith Common, in the south, offers varied habitats such as heather, woodland, marsh, and ponds and holds high conservation value. Villages such as Riccall, Skipwith, and Thorganby lie on the area's edge; Riccall, the largest, has a Conservation Area. Scattered farmsteads and cottages follow traditional estate patterns. The largely rural character is only interrupted by one former industrial site at Riccall mine. Heritage assets include Grade I, II, and II* Listed Buildings, mostly in Riccall and Thorganby, plus Scheduled Monuments and cropmarks. Farms are linked mainly by minor roads, with major connections via the A19 and A163. The Trans Pennine Trail promoted route runs across the site parallel to the A19. There are also several smaller footpaths and bridleways across the area. The views across the flat landscape tend to be interrupted by hedgerows and frequent woodland. Apart from the former mining site, the area has a largely rural character that is associated with quietness, particularly within Skipwith Common which is isolated with little visible human development.	None	Riccall Conservation Area Skipworth Common (SSSI, SAC and NNR) Several SINCs Ancient Woodland (Hollicars Wood and Common Wood).	Intensively farmed landscape, although interspersed with locally important waterbodies, woodlands and particularly the heathland at Skipwith Common. Skipwith Common is of high conservation value and designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and National Nature Reserve (NNR). Areas of woodland, including Ancient Woodland occur throughout the north and centre. There is largely broadleaved woodland in the south and east and more mixed leaf in the north and west of the area.	Variable time depth, with a greater sense within the Riccall Conservation Area and at Skipwith Common, which offers a glimpse of an older landscape, now largely absent. Most of the landscape was extensively drained and enclosed as recently as the 20th century. There are localised areas of older medieval strip fields found near Thorganby. The former industrial site at Riccall mine was once was a site of coal extraction for electrical power generation and coal was transported nationally by nearby railways but is now closed.	Generally, in mixed condition with some well-maintained fences and intact hedgerows but also some localised areas with hedgerow loss arising from intensive farming or development.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional
Relatively flat arable farmland, with a strong presence of woodland plantation throughout the landscape. Semi-enclosed landscape with extensive areas of woodland plantation concentrated around Skipwith. Broad area of heather and heather grassland, of high conservation value, located at Skipwith Common National Nature Reserve (NNR) to the south-west of Skipwith. Medium-large scale varied field pattern defined commonly by ditches and dikes or by sparse and irregular hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.	Dominated by predominantly arable farmland interspersed with woodland plantations and small villages, which is common across the wider landscape. The range of habitats within Skipwith Common makes it locally distinctive.	There is a minor network of PRoW, used primarily for local recreation. National Cycle Network Route 65, part of the Trans Pennine Trail promoted route, crosses the area in the west, via Riccall and parallel to the A19, following the former railway line. Skipwith Common is also located within in the south of the area. Both are important recreational assets.	Skipwith Common attracts local tourism due to its recreational value, promoted through waymarked trails, links to the Trans Pennine Trail and National Cycle Network, and visitor facilities such as parking and access routes. Holiday parks, such as Hollicarrs Holiday park at Escrick Estate and others.	Much of the landscape is visually contained and enclosed by mature trees, hedgerows and woodland, which contribute to views across the relatively flat landscape.	The strongly rural character of the area lack human influence and is quiet and isolated, particularly at Skipwith Common. This sense of tranquillity is reduced closer to the A19 and A163. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: - Openness of the landscape (freedom from development) - Areas of low noise. These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: - Visibility and noise from A19 and A163	Several small tributaries cut across the landscape and contribute to natural floodplains for the River Derwent in the east and River Ouse in the west. Woodland provides valuable habitats and cover.

Summary of key landscape features	Value attached to the landscape		Valued landscape	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity	
Predominantly arable farmland, with strong presence of woodlands Relatively flat topography. Ditches and irregular hedgerows typically form field boundaries.	Medium		No	Medium	Medium	
	LCA 3 contains no landscape designations but parts are covered by several other important environmental designations. It is an intensively farmed landscape but with woodland contributing strongly to the character in some areas. There is some cultural value associate with heritage associated with villages and Skipworth Common. Scenic quality is limited and views are often screened by vegetation in flat landscape. Strong rural character.			The more wooded areas of the landscape or where there are strong hedgerow frameworks may be able to absorb the type of change proposed, particularly in areas less open to views.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of medium value attached to the landscape and medium susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-16 LCA 3: Skipwith Lowlands - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Changes will arise in landscape character relating to Solar Development Site 1 in the northern part of the LCA, caused by construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic and machinery movement, temporary lighting and material storage, including the proposed 275 kV substation in Field 1.19 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**, coupled with the presence of construction machinery. This will disrupt the openness across a large part of the LCA towards its northern boundary. Changes will also occur due to construction traffic entering the LCA from the northern access point on Wheldrake Lane. Construction of the CRC 1-4 , which will run diagonally across the LCA from Solar Development Site 1 for approximately 5 km to a point south-west of Riccall, where it crosses the A19 will create temporary severance in the landscape, localised vegetation removal and disruption caused by temporary soil storage and cable laying. Cable Construction Compound 3, which will be located east of Riccall, will introduce temporary structures and activity. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction during hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity within the northern part of the LCA and the central area of CRC 1-4 . No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. The combined changes caused by the construction of the Solar Development Site, CRC 1-4 and Construction Compound will be across a large part of the LCA. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Medium	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Across CRC 1-4 trenches will be backfilled, and reinstatement works will be complete. Any residual soil disturbance will be barely perceptible. A small amount of vegetation removed to install the cables will not noticeably affect the landscape character. There will be changes to landscape character and loss of openness due to permanent introduction of solar panels across the northern part of the LCA, and the 275 kV substation partially offset by retained framework of existing hedgerows. The presence of the solar panels and substation will introduce new industrial structures into the landscape and the tranquillity of the LCA in the northern central part will be reduced to a small degree.	The medium magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during year 1 of operation.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
Low	Minor adverse
By Year 15, the landscape character in the northern part of the LCA will be changed by a strengthened framework of established trees and hedgerows, which will provide screening and integration of the solar panels and substation. The new planting will reinforce and connect existing landscape features, such as hedgerows and woodland blocks, creating a more robust and continuous green infrastructure network. While the openness of the landscape will not be fully restored, the prominence of the development will be substantially reduced, and the landscape will exhibit a more vegetated and ecologically rich character. The reinstated vegetation along CRC 1-4 will have returned the central part of the LCA to its baseline.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is not significant.

2.9 LCA 5: Ouse Valley

Table 2-17 LCA 5: Ouse Valley - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
District	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	River Floodplain (LCT 24)	LCA 5 Ouse Valley
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	CRC 1-4		

Summary	Determining the value attached to the landscape					
	Landscape designations	Other relevant designations	Natural heritage	Cultural heritage	Landscape condition	Associations
The Ouse Valley is a very flat, low-lying floodplain, mostly below 10 mAOD, shaped by the meandering River Ouse as it flows from Stillingfleet in the north to the south-east. The land rises to nearly 40 mAOD north-west of Drax Power Station. The area is underlain by sandstones and thick alluvium. Arable farming dominates, with pasture more common in the northern valley. Fields are generally large and irregular, shaped by the river, with smaller, regular fields near Kelfield and south of Barlby. Boundaries are often ditches or grass margins. Settlements including Cawood, Kelfield, Barlby, Newland, hamlets, and isolated farms are on slightly higher ground. Heritage assets such as Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings are concentrated in Cawood, Barlby, and Kelfield. The A63, A19, and B1222 are the only river crossings, leaving much of the riverside inaccessible by road. Public rights of way and the Trans Pennine Trail run along the riverbank. The open landscape, limited tree cover, and high embankments create long views and often conceal the river. Drax Power Station and Rusholme Wind Farm are prominent features, while limited road access elsewhere gives a sense of isolation despite the human-modified landscape.	None	Cawood Conservation Area Several SINCs	Intensively farmed for arable and pasture purposes, with substantial field-boundary loss although riparian vegetation along the riverbanks contributes positively to the character of the area, increasing the sense of naturalness. Numerous sites designated as SINCs are located within the Ouse Valley, including: Wharfe Ings; Kelfield Ings; Mulberry Farm Ponds; Roscarrs Ponds; and Staynor Wood.	Much of the Ouse Valley is a landscape shaped by recent drainage and enclosure, with regular fields and straight ditches. Heritage features are mainly concentrated in villages, notably in the Cawood Conservation Area, which includes several Grade I and II Listed Buildings. The valley also contains Scheduled Monuments such as Cawood Castle, Castle Garth, and moated sites at Kelfield and Scurff Hall, with further clusters of Listed Buildings in Cawood, Barlby, and Kelfield. Remnants of medieval strip fields near Cawood and Cliffe provide evidence of older landscape patterns. While modern agriculture dominates, pockets of historic features remain along the river and within settlements.	Low condition overall, arising from intensive farming and draining practices leading to hedgerow loss and heavily engineered flood banks of River Ouse. Occasionally riverbanks are also topped with sheet piles, emphasising the extensive human influence across this drained landscape.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional
▪ Very flat, low-lying floodplains of the River Ouse used predominantly as arable farmland. ▪ Medium to large scale patchwork of heavily drained fields, commonly defined by ditches or grassed banks. ▪ High grassy and vegetated flood embankments help disguise the river as it flows through the landscape. ▪ Localised areas of wetland and marsh provide valuable biodiversity habitats. ▪ Significant number of settlements including villages, hamlets and the town of Selby, located along the course of the River Ouse. ▪ Confluences of the Wharfe and Ouse to the north of Cawood, and the Ouse and Aire at Airmyn to the south-east. ▪ Strong influence of human elements including the prominent Drax Power Station, Rusholme Wind Farm, pylons running through the landscape, and river levees. ▪ Distinct lack of woodland and tree cover creates a sense of vast openness.	A flat landscape with limited tree cover and prominent high river embankments create a distinct character, emphasising the extensive human influence over this drained landscape. Drax Power Station also forms a distinctive local landmark to the east.	There are several PRoW which run adjacent to the riverbank, for most of its length, although not continuously and seldom on both sides. The National Cycle Route 65 (Trans Pennine Trail) runs adjacent to the River Ouse around Barlby and Selby and south of Hemingbrough.	Not associated with tourism.	Extensive open views create a vast sense of scale, with some intervisibility between landscape character areas. Selby Abbey is a noticeable landmark visible on the horizon, alongside industrial buildings in the town, as is Drax power station. Skylines are generally indistinct and therefore of limited sensitivity.	Strong sense of isolation and tranquillity despite the lack of wholly 'natural' landscape features. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: ▪ Openness of the landscape (freedom from development) ▪ Perceived naturalness of the landscape ▪ Areas of low noise ▪ Presence of major river.	Area largely consists of floodplains of the River Ouse, used predominantly as arable farmland.

Summary of key landscape features	Value attached to the landscape		Valued landscape	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity	
Flat low-lying arable floodplains and river defined by high flood embankments. Very open with little tree cover and areas of wetland and marsh predominate. Hedges are in compact form due to regular management.	Low		No	High	Medium	
	LCA 5 contains no formal landscape designations and only limited environmental and heritage designations. These include several small SINCs, along with notable heritage assets including Selby Abbey, Cawood Conservation Area, Scheduled Monuments and scattered Listed Buildings. Despite these features, the wider landscape is heavily drained, lacks structural diversity and is generally of poor overall quality.			The area may be susceptible to relatively small changes, due to the large scale flat open landscape in which new features will be prominent. The River Ouse is a key landscape feature, which itself is highly sensitive to development.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of low value attached to the landscape but high susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-18 LCA 5: Ouse Valley - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
Low	Minor adverse
No Solar Development Sites fall within LCA 5, with closest Solar Development Site 1 located approximately 5 km to the north-east. Changes will arise in landscape character due to the excavation of the CRC 1-4 . The corridor will run across a narrow section in the centre of the LCA, crossing the River Ouse and adjacent fields. In the fields adjacent to the river, the cable will typically be installed in open-cut trenches within a working corridor up to 25 metres wide. The trench depth may increase as the cable approaches the river crossing. The cable will be installed beneath the River Ouse using a trenchless solution with Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) assumed as a worst case. This method avoids disturbing the riverbed and banks by drilling a tunnel under the river, through which the cable is pulled. HDD requires the construction of launch and reception pits, each approximately 25 m x 25 m, set back from the riverbanks to further protect the watercourse. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity in a very small proportion of the overall LCA. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction during hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity within the Cable Route Corridor working area. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during construction, which is not significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Low	Minor adverse
No permanent above-ground infrastructure will be located within LCA 5; CRC 1-4 . All construction areas, including HDD pits, will be fully reinstated to their original condition after works are complete. There will be slight change in year 1 of operation as planting to reinstate vegetation removed to facilitate construction will have been implemented but not yet established.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor effects during year 1 of operation, which is not significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
By Year 15 of operation, there will be no discernible change in landscape character compared to the baseline. The proposed planting to reinstate vegetation removed for construction will have matured, effectively restoring field boundaries and vegetation structure such that the reinstated corridor will blend with the surrounding landscape.	No effect

2.10 LCA 7: Aire Valley

Table 2-19 LCA 7: Aire Valley - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
District	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	River Floodplain (LCT 24)	LCA 7: Aire Valley
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Solar Development Site 4 (Southern edge)		

Summary	Determining the value attached to the landscape					
	Landscape designations	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
This area is low-lying (below 10 mAOD) and predominantly flat, with little topographic variation. The broad and meandering River Aire runs mainly through the wide farmed levels, although in the west it becomes a narrower floodplain contained by rising ground as it crosses the limestone ridge. Most of the landscape is covered by a layer of alluvium. Arable land covers the vast majority of the floodplain, with a small area of pasture in the east. The shape and size of the large-scale fields are dictated by the meandering river and often defined by ditches and dikes which drain the farmland. Smaller more regularly shaped fields are frequently located near settlements and are often delineated by hedgerows with hedgerow trees. Narrow but dense strips of riparian vegetation line the high banks of the riverside, partially concealing the river. The floodplains feature very few woodlands, although numerous sites located along the path of the River Aire are designated as SINCs. There are numerous riverside settlements, including Kellingley, Beal, Birkin, West Haddlesey, Chapel Haddlesey, Temple Hirst and Hirst Courtney, which are sited on subtly higher ground within the floodplain, along the Birkin to Haddlesey road and feature several Listed Buildings. Several A roads, rail crossings and pipe bridges cross the river and there are several. National Cycle Route 62 crosses the River Aire in the east of the LCA. There are intermittent PRoW running along both the banks of the river, although with significant gaps. The flat landscape with limited tree cover creates a sense of exposure with open views across the landscape. Power stations and pylons form distinctive human elements visible from within this landscape.	None	Fairburn Ings SSSI and Nature Reserve Several SINCs	This is an intensively farmed landscape, although interspersed with locally important waterbodies and meadows. Fairburn Ings Nature Reserve in the west of the character area and the Eskamhorn Meadows SSSI in the east of the character areas, nationally designated for its species-rich unimproved neutral grassland notable. Numerous sites located along the River Aire are designated as SINCs, including: Newland Ings, Carlton Park Pond, and Beal Carrs. The more vegetated landscape in the east, at Carlton Towers creates a more rural character.	There is limited time-depth in this landscape, most of which has been relatively recently drained and enclosed. Small villages have a well-established character and individual heritage assets make a local contribution to heritage value. The Grade I listed Church at Birkin is noteworthy.	Low condition overall, arising from intensively farmed and drained landscape with heavily engineered flood banks along the River Aire.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional
• Flat, low-lying floodplains to the north and south of the meandering River Aire, which widens further downstream. • High riverbanks are frequently densely vegetated with shrub, natural grassland and occasional trees, partially concealing the river. • Patchwork of fields use primarily for arable farming, defined commonly by ditches, dikes and hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. • Areas of wetlands, marshy grasslands and fen located within the floodplain, which offer high nature conservation value. • Power stations and pylons form distinctive human elements visible from within this landscape. • Numerous bridges cross the River Aire, including the A1 in the west.	A flat landscape with limited tree cover and prominent high river embankments create a distinct character, emphasising the strong human influences over this drained landscape. Drax Power Station also forms a distinctive landmark.	There is a good network of PRoW in the west but this becomes scarcer in the east. They are used primarily for local recreation. National Cycle Route 62 crosses the River Aire in the east of the LCA before continuing westwards to Temple Hirst.	Not associated with tourism.	Long ranging open views across the landscape, particularly further west, create a sense of vastness and rurality especially in more isolated areas. Long, straight roads in the west of the character area provide vistas through the landscape, whereas the east features more winding roads with less visibility. Drax Power Station is a prominent landmark on the skyline, visible from many parts of the landscape but there are few other landmarks although church spires are locally important.	The area has a largely rural feel and is quiet in most places although the sense of tranquillity is reduced further west near the A1. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: - Openness of the landscape (freedom from development) - Perceived naturalness of the landscape - Areas of low noise - Presence of major river. These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: - Visibility and noise of A1(M) to west. -Power stations and pylons.	Area largely consists of floodplains of the River Aire, used predominantly as arable farmland.
Summary of key landscape features	**Value attached to the landscape**		**Valued landscape**	**Susceptibility to change**	**Sensitivity**	
Flat low-lying arable floodplains and river defined by high flood embankments, with frequent vegetation. Little tree cover and areas of wetland and marsh predominate.	Low		No	Medium	Medium	
	LCA 7 contains no landscape designations and has limited other environmental designations, apart from several small SINCs and other areas of ecological value at the eastern and western ends of the LCA. This is a heavily drained landscape, with little landscape structure and overall poor landscape quality.			The area may be susceptible to relatively small changes, due to the flat open landscape in which new features are readily visible. Conversely, the more enclosed nature of the landscape in the west may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed solar farm development as the increased presence of vegetation reduces open views.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of low value attached to the landscape and medium susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-20 LCA7: Aire Valley - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
Very low	Negligible adverse
No construction works associated with the solar development areas or Cable Route Corridors are anticipated within this area. There will be increased construction traffic on northern edge of LCA 5 along Haddlesey Road accessing Solar Development Site 4.	The very low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in negligible adverse effects during construction, which is not significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Very low	Minor neutral
There will be very low magnitude of changes arising from new hedgerow planting along the northern edge of Solar Development Site 4, which will not have been established.	The very low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor neutral effects during year 1 of operation, which is not significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
Very low	Minor beneficial
By year 15 of operation the hedgerow planting will have established, providing new habitat and landscape features within a small area on the northern edge of the LCA.	The very low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor beneficial effects during year 15 of operation, which is not significant.

2.11 LCA 8: West Selby Limestone Ridge

Table 2-21 LCA 8: West Selby Limestone Ridge - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area		County Character Area		District Character Area	
District	Southern Magnesium Limestone (NCA 30)		LCT6: Magnesium Limestone Ridge		LCA 8 West Selby Limestone Ridge	
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**					
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	CRC 4-POC					
Summary	**Determining the value attached to the landscape**					
	Landscape designations	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
This LCA contrasts with the flatter terrain to the east, featuring a rolling limestone ridge that rises to 80 mAOD in the west. Magnesian Limestone underlies the area, with active quarries such as Brotherton, Newthorpe, and Jackdaw Crag. Land use is predominantly large-scale arable farming, interspersed with smaller fields near Tadcaster and central areas. Forestry is common on upper slopes, while pasture occurs in lower valleys like Cock Beck. Two watercourses, Cock Beck and Newthorpe Beck, cross the area. Fields are generally open and medium-to-large scale, defined by fragmented hedgerows and occasional ditches, though woodland and undulating landform create localised enclosure. Large areas of calcareous woodland, many of which are identified as Ancient Woodland and SINCs, are distributed throughout the landscape. The historic environment is rich, with Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, and notable estates such as Grimston Park and Hazelwood Castle. The settlements within this area, including the town of Tadcaster in the far north, and the villages including Stutton, Sherburn in Elmet and South Milford, are served by a range of major and minor winding roads. Despite major roads, mineral sites, energy transmission infrastructure, and views of Hook Moor Wind Farm to the west, the landscape preserves a rural character with a tranquil and occasionally remote feel. Much of this landscape character area is designated as a Locally Important Landscape Area (LILA) as the rolling limestone ridge is one of the more scenic landscapes within the district due to its varying landform and tree cover.	Limestone Ridge LILA	• Conservation Areas (Newton Kyme, Tadcaster and Saxton) • Ancient Woodland • Numerous Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) including Stutton Ings, Sherburn Willows, Fairburn and Newton Ings. • Several SINCs	Extensive calcareous woodlands, especially on the limestone ridge, are a key natural feature, with many areas designated as Ancient Woodland or SINCs supporting diverse wildlife. Species-rich grasslands occur within SSSIs like Stutton Ings and Sherburn Willows, influenced by Magnesian limestone. Fairburn and Newton Ings SSSI are permanently flooded, creating marsh and wet pasture that, along with farmland and dykes, form a mosaic of habitats. Locally important streams, marshes, and wetlands are interspersed throughout the landscape, enhancing biodiversity and ecological connectivity.	There is a great sense of time-depth across this landscape, with numerous settlements including Tadcaster, Newton Kyme and Saxton featuring Conservation Areas, and important areas of parkland. Most of the landscape comprises large, amalgamated fields, with localised areas containing earlier enclosures on steeper ground, and strip fields of medieval age around the settlements of Saxton, South Milford and Burton Salmon. There are numerous individual heritage assets, including the Towton Registered Battlefield, Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings.	Evidence of alteration to the landscape through field amalgamation. Areas of woodland and shelterbelts throughout remain intact, as do watercourses.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional
• Low ridge of magnesian limestone with large scale rolling arable farmland. • Irregularly shaped, large scale arable fields, defined by hedgerows and field margin buffers with intermittent hedgerow trees, or occasionally ditches. • Strong presence of large areas of calcareous woodland to the west of the character area, providing a sense of semi-enclosure. • Major transport links dissect this landscape, including the main trunk roads A1, A63, and A64, and railway lines. • Local influences include parkland landscapes and mineral sites for limestone extraction. • Sparse settlement pattern outside the town of Tadcaster and small villages, with few isolated properties and farmsteads.	Strongly undulating landscape and wooded and enclosed character of the area creates a strong sense of place.	There is a relatively limited network of PRoW, which are used primarily for local recreation. There are also a few recreational assets.	Local tourism associated with Tadcaster in north of LCA.	Most of the skylines across the character area, including the Limestone Ridge LILA, are wooded and undeveloped. The limestone ridge forms the skyline within the lower landscape to the east, and contributes to the setting of villages on the east side of the ridge. There are few landmarks visible from this landscape.	The LCA has a strong rural and tranquil character throughout the area. The sense of tranquillity is reduced towards the fringes of the character area due to proximity to major roads including the A1 (M) in the west, the A64 in the north, and the A162 in the east. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: - Openness of the landscape (freedom from development). - Perceived naturalness of the landscape. - Areas of low noise. These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: - Visibility and noise from major roads A1 (M), A64 and A162.	Large areas of arable farmland serve as floodplains for the Cock Beck valley and Newthorpe Beck valley. Large areas of woodland also dominate in the west and contribute to the healthy functioning of the landscape.

Summary of key landscape features	Value attached to the landscape		Valued landscape	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity	
Large scale fields with mostly patchy, low-quality boundary vegetation and occasional moderate-quality trees, rolling arable farmland with occasional hedgerow trees. Calcareous woodland in west. Parkland landscapes.	Medium		No	High	High	
	LCA 8 is largely covered by a local landscape designation and features several other important environmental designations. It is an intensively farmed landscape but with woodland contributing strongly to the character in some areas. High cultural and natural heritage value. There is high scenic quality and strong rural character, although reduced near main roads.			The strongly undulating landscape has substantial woodland cover and the elevated location is generally susceptible to change. There are exceptions where the large scale of the landscape and presence of woodland may be able to absorb the type of change proposed.	The sensitivity is based on the high value attached to the landscape and the high susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-22 LCA 8: West Selby Limestone Ridge Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
Low	Minor adverse
Changes will arise in landscape character due to the temporary change of land use and reduction of openness from the excavation of approximately 5 km of CRC 4-POCand connection to Monk Fryston substation. The corridor will run across a short section of the southern part of the LCA, south of the A63, approximately 0.5 km south from the Limestone Ridge LILA. The extent of change will be localised, with no permanent above-ground infrastructure in LCA 8, except for a new bay within the existing Monk Fryston substation. Cable Route Corridor works will be confined to the narrow working corridor and reinstatement strip, comprising temporary severance of field parcels and farm movements, excavation and temporary earthworks/topsoil storage locally affecting field pattern and surface texture, removal of up to three trees, realignment of short sections of hedgerow/boundary vegetation to facilitate access and trenching. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. The LILA's key qualities (rolling Magnesian Limestone ridge, wooded skylines, and parkland/ancient woodland pattern) will remain intact. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity in the impacted section of the LCA, south of the A63. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction during hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity within the Cable Route Corridor working area, albeit that the northern part of the works is already influenced by proximity to the A63.The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the high sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during construction, which is not significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Low	Minor adverse
There will be a slight change to landscape character in year 1 of operation as planting carried out to reinstate vegetation removed to facilitate construction will have been implemented but will not have established. There will also be some scarring of the landscape where soils are replaced but crops or grassland has not established. The new bay at the existing Monk Fryston substation will form part of the existing industrial elements in the landscape and the landscape features around it will be retained, except for those affected by the construction.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the high sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor effects during year 1 of operation, which is not significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
No change	No effect
By year 15 of operation planting carried out to reinstate vegetation removed to facilitate construction will have established to restore and strengthen field boundaries and the landscape pattern. As a consequence, there will no discernible change in the character of LCA 8. .	No effects on the landscape resource after 15 years, which is not significant.

2.12 LCA 11: Sherburn Farmland

Table 2-23 LCA 11: Sherburn Farmland - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
District	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	Levels Farmland (LCT 23)	LCA 11: Sherburn Farmland
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Solar Development Sites 2, 6, 7 and 8. CRC 1-4 , CRC 2-8, CRC 2-6 and CRC 6-7 .		

Summary	Determining the value attached to the landscape					
	Landscape designations	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
This area is predominantly flat, mostly below 10 mAOD except for the artificial high point near the disused Gascoigne Wood Mine. Good quality soils support intensive arable farming in large, rectilinear fields defined by ditches, drains, and grass margins, with occasional boundary trees. Smaller, semi-regular pasture fields are found near settlements, and limited woodland adds to the sense of openness. There are no rivers, but many straightened drains, including the Selby Dam and its feeders. Ecological designations are few, with Barber Rein/Ash Rein woodland (Ancient Woodland) and Burr Closes (SSSI) as notable sites. The area contains a Scheduled Monument at Thorpe Hall and several Listed Buildings, mainly in Church Fenton and the south-east. The west features significant human intervention: industrial, mineral extraction, and aerodrome uses. Villages are generally on higher ground with good road and PRoW access. The landscape is largely rural and open, but human activity is prominent in the west, with Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff as southern landmarks.	None	• Monk Fryston Conservation Area • Barber Rein/Ash Rein Ancient Woodland • Several SINCs	This is an intensively farmed landscape with relatively few natural features, apart from isolated locally important woodlands. Low hedgerows and isolated field trees make some contribution towards the character of the area. Within the LCA, Barber Rein/Ash Rein woodland to the north-east of Thorpe Wood is identified as a small Ancient Woodland. A substantial Ancient Woodland, Little Moss Hagg, lies on the LCA's north-eastern boundary. Burr Closes, near Selby, is a small area of damp alluvial meadowland designated as a SSSI. Areas of more traditionally managed pasture are designated as SINCs.	Cultural heritage in this area is limited, with most assets found in Church Fenton, Barkston Ash, and Monk Fryston. Most of the landscape has been heavily drained and enclosed as recently as the 20th century, with high levels of boundary loss which has resulted in the large-scale modern fields present today. There are localised areas of older enclosure, including pockets of medieval strip fields around Church Fenton, Barkston Ash and Monk Fryston, which also has a small parkland. Key heritage features include a Scheduled Monument at Thorpe Hall and several Listed Buildings, notably the Grade I Church of St Mary the Virgin and other listed farmhouses.	Low condition overall, arising from intensive farming practices, with few natural features and loss of hedgerow structure across much of area.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional
Flat low-lying predominantly arable farmland with little tree cover and few hedgerows. Large scale fields often defined by dikes or ditches and irregularly spaced isolated trees. Outside the main villages within the area, settlement is sparse with occasional isolated properties and farmsteads. Small dispersed areas of broadleaved woodland, including intermittent woodland belts. Predominantly rural character with a strong sense of openness, however with dominant industrial scale human elements to the west around Sherburn in Elmet.	Flat low-lying predominantly arable farmland with little tree cover and few hedgerows, aside from hill at Gascoigne Wood Mine. Large scale fields often defined by dikes or ditches, with occasional isolated trees or small woodland copses. Industry conspicuous near Sherburn in Elmet.	Sparse network of footpaths and few other recreational assets.	Not associated with tourism.	Extensive open views over the flat landscape provide a strong sense of openness. Views to the south of the LCA generally consist of skylines with significant human influence. Views northwards and to the east are generally less developed. The hill adjacent to Gascoigne Wood mine is a key landform which is visible on the skyline. The industrial and commercial development at Sherburn Enterprise Park introduces prominent and detracting man-made features. Selby Abbey and the sandstone hills of Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff are landmarks in the east and south of the character area.	Whilst the northern and eastern parts of the LCA have a stronger rural character with associated tranquillity, the highly industrial skyline and lighting in the west results in a reduction in perceived naturalness and tranquillity. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: - Openness of the landscape (freedom from development). - Areas of low noise. These are offset to a large degree by negative factors: - Signs of human impact in terms of industry and railway lines to west/ A63 to south.	Area predominantly agricultural with poor contribution to natural systems or green infrastructure networks. Large areas of industrial land use to the east of Sherburn In Elmet.
Summary of key landscape features	**Value attached to the landscape**		**Valued landscape**	**Susceptibility to change**	**Sensitivity**	
Flat, low lying large scaled arable farmland typically defined by ditches. Little tree cover or hedgerow field boundaries.	Low		No	Low	Low	
	LCA 11 contains no landscape designations and has limited other environmental designations generally, apart from several small SINCs and a small Ancient Woodland. This is a heavily drained landscape, with little landscape structure and overall poor landscape quality.			While solar farms could be conspicuous in this flat, open landscape, the large-scale arable farmland's degraded condition and weak sense of place mean it has low overall susceptibility to change. Areas with more enclosure further east may be more sensitive.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of low value attached to the landscape and low susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-24 LCA 11: Sherburn Farmland - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic and machinery movement, temporary lighting and material storage, will change the rural character and reduce openness. This will be across Solar Development Sites 2, 6, 7 and 8, and include works associated with the proposed 275 kV substation and BESS on Solar Development Site 2 (Field 2.4 as shown on the Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03**]). Changes will also occur due to construction traffic entering the LCA from the A63 for the construction of Solar Development Sites 2 and 8, the A162 for the construction of Solar Development Sites 6, 7 and 8 and B1222 for the construction of Solar Development Site 8. Changes will also occur due the excavation of CRC 1-4 crosses the eastern part of the LCA diagonally across the B1223 and Selby Dam; 4B Amended (between Solar Development Sites 2 and 8 north of A63), CRC 2-6 and CRC 6-7 in the south-western corner around Solar Development Sites 2, 6 and 7. Changes will also arise due to Construction Cable Construction Compound 1 and Cable Construction Compound 2, located near Thorpe Willoughby and north of Selby respectively. The works will comprise temporary severance of field parcels and farm movements, excavation and temporary earthworks/topsoil storage locally affecting field pattern and surface texture, removal of up to nine trees, realignment of short sections of hedgerow/boundary vegetation to facilitate access and trenching. Most hedgerows will be retained, with only short sections removed for construction access. Existing woodlands will remain, and works will be set back from water bodies and existing hedgerows, limiting changes to landscape features and reducing overall impact magnitude. Construction exclusion zones and fencing will protect retained trees and their root zones. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity in the LCA. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction during hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity across a large part of the southern and south-eastern leg of the LCA, albeit with the existing influence of the A63 in the south and industry in the west. The combined changes caused by the construction of the Solar Development Sites, Cable Route Corridor and Construction Compounds will be across a large part of the southern and southeastern part of the LCA. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Medium	Minor adverse
There will be changes to landscape character due to long-term installation of solar panels with associated infrastructure and fencing across Solar Development Sites 2, 6, 7 and 8, and proposed 275 kV substation and BESS on Solar Development Site 2 (Field 2.4 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**) Solar panels and associated infrastructure will reduce tranquillity in the LCA by introducing prominent built features of the Sites, reducing openness, removing vegetation. The impacts will be in the south-western sector, where multiple sites and corridors are concentrated, and existing boundary vegetation is weak. All disturbed areas, including hedges and trees lost to cable installation, will be reinstated or replanted post-construction. Surrounding woodland, near Gascoigne Wood Mine around Solar Development Sites 6, 7 and 8 will assist with landscape integration. Across CRC 1-4 there will be a slight change to landscape character in year 1 of operation as planting carried out to reinstate vegetation removed to facilitate construction will have been implemented but will not have established. There will also be some scarring of the landscape where soils are replaced but crops or grassland has not established.	The magnitude of impact will be medium. This, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is not significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
Low	Minor adverse

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
By Year 15, the landscape character in the south-western part of the LCA will be changed by a strengthened framework of established trees and hedgerows, which will provide screening and integration of the solar panels, although the BESS / 275 kV substation at Solar Development Site 2, whilst screened, will still have a detracting influence. The new planting will reinforce and connect existing landscape features, such as hedgerows and woodland blocks, creating a more robust and continuous green infrastructure network. While the openness of the landscape will not be fully restored, the prominence of the development will be substantially reduced, and the landscape will exhibit a more vegetated and ecologically rich character. The reinstated vegetation along CRC 1-4 will have returned the eastern part of the LCA to its baseline.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is not significant.

2.13 LCA 12: North Selby Farmland

Table 2-25 LCA 12: North Selby Farmland - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
District	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	Levels Farmland (LCT 23)	LCA 12: North Selby Farmland
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	CRC 1-4		
Summary	**Determining the value attached to the landscape**		
North Selby Farmland is a flat, low-lying area (mostly under 10 mAOD) dominated by intensive	**Landscape designations**	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**

Hierarchy	National Character Area		County Character Area		District Character Area	
arable farming in large fields bordered by thick hedgerows, mature trees, and scattered woodlands, especially in the north-west and central regions. Smaller pasture fields are found near Leeds East Airport and isolated farmsteads, with some open areas offering long views. Woodland and dense hedgerows create a sense of enclosure, limiting views except in more open parts near Ryther, Ulleskelf, and the B1223. The area contains several heritage assets, including Scheduled Monuments such as RAF Church Fenton and Cawood Castle, and clusters of Listed Buildings mainly in Ulleskelf, Wistow, Scarthingwell, and Cawood. Settlements are mostly on the fringes, well connected by roads and public rights of way, while the interior has few isolated properties. The lack of built development and major roads enhances the overall quiet rural character of the area and increases the associated tranquillity. Views are generally limited by woodland and shelterbelts, although longer ranging views are experienced through gaps in vegetation and in the more open areas in the north.	None	• Bishop Wood, Great Lawn Wood, Paradise Wood, Patefield Wood and Carr Wood are all identified as Ancient Woodland and SINCs • In addition, Haighs Grass, Castle Garth and Keesbury Hall Close are all designated SINCs. • Kirkby Wharf SSSI.	Although much of the landscape is used for intensive farming, the presence of woodland and tree cover along field boundaries creates a strong sense of naturalness, aside from the openness of the land around the East Leeds Airport. The presence of Ancient Woodland, SINCs and Kirkby Wharf SSSI confer natural heritage value.	Time-depth in this landscape is focused within the settlements on the fringes including Cawood, Wistow and Kirkby Wharfe, as well as in the areas of Ancient Woodland. Most of the landscape has been drained and enclosed relatively recently, with some localised areas of older, medieval strip fields near Cawood, Wistow and Kirkby Wharfe. Sensitive recent history is found in the landscape of the former RAF Church Fenton.	Some areas of intact farmland with a strong presence of natural features, including extensive areas of Ancient Woodland.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.
Key characteristics	**Distinctiveness**	**Recreational**	**Tourism**	**Perceptual (scenic)**	**Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)**	**Functional**

Hierarchy	National Character Area		County Character Area		District Character Area	
• Predominantly flat low-lying farmland with a strong presence of woodland scattered throughout the landscape, providing a frequent sense of enclosure. • Settlement pattern is sparse with villages concentrated in the fringes, and isolated farmsteads within the interior. • Extensive areas of broadleaved woodland, including Bishop Wood, the largest woodland in Selby. • Flat and open in some areas, with long distance views around Leeds East Airport (former RAF Church Fenton). • Medium-large scale field pattern, defined by hedgerows with mature trees, and areas of woodland.	Flat farmland with no distinctive landforms. Strong presence of woodland and shelterbelts throughout the area creates a sense of place.	There is a well-connected network of PRoW, in the north-east of the character area, valued for local recreation. There are few other recreational assets.	Not associated with tourism.	Skylines are generally dominated by woodland and mature hedgerow trees. There are few landmarks other than Bishop Wood within this landscape, although there are longer views to Selby Abbey in the east.	This area has a strong rural character, resulting from the general lack of built development and major roads. The semi-enclosed nature of the landscape and general sense of tranquillity, away from the main roads, creates a strong rural character. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: - Openness of the landscape (freedom from development). - Perceived naturalness of the landscape. - Areas of low noise. These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: - Signs of development in terms of industry and railway lines to west.	The entirety of the area is heavily drained, dissected by numerous drains and dikes, forming a valuable floodplain.
Summary of key landscape features	**Value attached to the landscape**			**Valued landscape**	**Susceptibility to change**	**Sensitivity**
Flat, low-lying farmland, with field pattern defined by hedgerows and mature trees. Extensive areas of Ancient broadleaved woodland.	Medium		No	Medium	Medium	Medium
	LCA 12 features many environmental designations, including Ancient Woodland and despite being an intensively farmed landscape, has some natural heritage value. Some scenic and cultural value and tranquillity away from roads.			Predominantly flat, large, scaled farmland balanced by extensive woodland cover lead to a medium susceptibility overall across the LCA.	Predominantly flat, large, scaled farmland balanced by extensive woodland cover lead to a medium susceptibility overall across the LCA.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of medium value attached to the landscape and medium susceptibility to change.

Table 2-26 LCA 12: North Selby Farmland - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
Low	Minor adverse
There are no Solar Development Sites within this LCA, the closest being Solar Development Site 8 located approximately 800 m south-west. The Cable Route Corridor will run across a short section (approximately 800 m) south of Sherburn road. Changes will arise in landscape character due to the excavation of the CRC 1-4 comprising temporary severance of field parcels and farm movements, excavation and temporary earthworks/topsoil storage locally affecting field pattern and surface texture, removal and realignment of short sections of hedgerow/boundary trees to facilitate access and trenching on Sherburn Road and Greenlands Lane. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity in the narrow, impacted section of the LCA. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction during hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity within the Cable Route Corridor working area. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during construction, which is not significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Very low	Negligible adverse
There will be a slight change to landscape character in year 1 of operation as planting carried out to reinstate vegetation removed to facilitate construction will have been implemented but will not have established. There will also be some scarring of the landscape where soils are replaced but crops or grassland has not established.	The very low magnitude of impact, assessed against the medium sensitivity of the receptor, will result in negligible adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is not significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
No change	No effect
There will be no perceptible change to the landscape after Year 15 as reinstatement planting will be established.	No effects on the landscape resource after 15 years, which is not significant.

2.14 LCA 13: Haddlesey Farmland

Table 2-27 LCA 13: Haddlesey Farmland - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
District	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	Levels Farmland (LCT 23)	LCA 13: Haddlesey Farmland
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Solar Development Sites 3 and 4; CRC 1-4 , CRC 2-8 , CRC 2-4 , CRC 3-4 , CRC 3-4a , CRC 4-POC		
Summary	**Determining the value attached to the landscape**		

Summary	Landscape designations	Other relevant designations	Natural heritage	Cultural heritage	Landscape condition	Associations
Flat, low-lying area averaging less than 10 mAOD, underlain by clay and silt deposits. The landscape is dominated by intensive arable farming in large, rectilinear fields, mainly defined by drains with occasional boundary trees. Smaller fields are found near Monk Fryston and Hillam. Woodland is scarce, except for a cluster near Gateforth, resulting in a strong sense of openness and long-distance views. The Selby Canal is the main watercourse located within the character area. It extends from the north-east, near Selby, down through the centre of the character area towards West Haddlesey and the River Aire. The low-lying area is otherwise dissected by many ditches which drain the wet farmland and commonly mark the field boundaries. Settlements are sparse, concentrated in the villages of Hillam, Monk Fryston, Burn, and the more dispersed Birkin. Most listed buildings are within Hillam and Monk Fryston Conservation Areas. The settlement pattern across the landscape is sparse, with most development located within the villages of Hillam and Monk Fryston to the north-west and Burn in the north-east. Smaller settlements such as Birkin are more dispersed. Beyond the boundaries of these settlements, there are relatively few isolated properties and farmsteads. Villages tend to be located along main roads, along with many minor roads and public rights of way which splay off from each settlement, connecting them with the wider surroundings and settlements. Energy transmission infrastructure is present in the south-west and south-east corners.	None	Hillam and Monk Fryston Conservation Area Some SINCs	This is an intensively farmed landscape with very few areas of woodland or other semi-natural or natural features. Areas around woodland near Gateforth represent rare natural features within this landscape. Two areas of woodland, Staker Wood and Bywater Wood, are also designated as SINCs.	There is limited time-depth in this landscape, as most of the landscape is the result of modern field amalgamation and relatively recent drainage. Some areas, by contrast, closer to the settlements of Brayton, Hillam and Monk Fryston contain listed buildings, earlier enclosures and localised areas of older medieval strip fields. The Selby Canal with its associated 18th century bridges and cottages is a key historic feature of this landscape. Burn Airfield in the east is a WWII-era airfield.	Low condition overall, arising from intensive farming practices, with loss of hedgerow structure across much of area and few natural features. Woodland at Gateforth is conspicuous exception.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional

• Flat arable farmland arranged in a patchwork of regularly shaped fields of a large scale, defined predominantly by grassed field margins, and occasional trees. • Distinct lack of hedgerows, creating a vast sense of openness with long distance views and lack of enclosure. • Very sparse settlement pattern, with few isolated properties. • Areas of woodland distributed unevenly through landscape, with significant areas concentrated near Gateforth. • Major energy transmission infrastructure comprising overhead power lines and occasional wind turbines.	Flat low-lying predominantly arable farmland with little tree cover and few hedgerows. Large scale fields often defined by dikes or ditches, with occasional isolated trees. Woodland at Gateforth is only distinctive feature.	There is a network of PRoW that cuts across the landscape, used for local recreation. There is limited east-west access across this LCA. National Cycle Network Route 62, (Trans Pennine Trail), crosses through the east of the area. Selby Canal is used for leisure boats, passing from the Aire to the Ouse.	Selby Canal has some value for tourism.	Extensive open views over the flat landscape provide a strong sense of openness. Skylines are frequently indistinct with limited vegetation, often featuring pylons. There are long, relatively straight roads that provide vistas through the landscape.	The area has a very strong rural character, albeit eroded by many overhead power lines. Generally, the landscape is quiet, aside from the major roads that have a localised influence. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following: - Openness of the landscape (freedom from development) - Areas of low noise. These are offset to a degree by negative factors: - Signs of human impact in terms of major overhead pylons - Visibility and noise from major roads e.g. A63.	Area predominantly agricultural with generally poor contribution to natural systems or green infrastructure networks, with the exception of woodland at Gateforth.

Summary of key landscape features	**Value attached to the landscape**		**Valued landscape**	**Susceptibility to change**	**Sensitivity**	
Flat arable farmland, fields of large scale typically defined by ditches and only occasional trees Woodland at Gateforth are important landscape features.	Low		No	Low	Low	
	LCA 13 contains no landscape designations and has limited other environmental designations generally, apart from some small SINCs. Heavily drained landscape, with little landscape structure and overall poor value attached to the landscape.			Although the very flat, open nature of the landscape may mean new interventions could be highly visible, the general area of large-scale arable farmland with degraded condition and weak sense of place, has low susceptibility to change overall.	The sensitivity is based on the combination of low value attached to the landscape and low susceptibility to change.	

Table 2-28 LCA 13: Haddlesey Farmland - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
Construction activities such as ground preparation, construction traffic and machinery movement, temporary lighting and material storage, will change the rural character and reduce openness across Solar Development Sites 3 and 4 located in the western part of the LCA. This will include the proposed 275 kV substation on Solar Development Site 4 (Field 4.4 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**). Changes will also occur due to works for CRC 1-4, 1-4a, 2-4, 3-4, 3-4A and 4-POC and Cable Construction Compound 5. Works will include temporary severance of field parcels and farm movements, excavation and temporary earthworks/topsoil storage locally affecting field pattern and surface texture, removal of up to seven trees, realignment of short sections of hedgerow/boundary vegetation to facilitate access and trenching. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. The combined changes caused by the construction of the Solar Development Sites, Cable Route Corridors and Cable Construction Compounds will be across a large part of the western part of the LCA. Most hedgerows will be retained, with only short sections removed for construction access. Existing woodlands will remain, and works will be set back from Wheldrake Lane, limiting changes to landscape features and reducing overall impact magnitude. Construction exclusion zones and fencing will protect retained trees and their root zones. “No-dig” construction methods will be used where access tracks cross root protection areas. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity in the LCA due to the presence of construction activities and vehicles. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction during hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity across a large part of the western part of the LCA, albeit with the existing influence of the A63 in the north and overhead pylons presence. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Medium	Minor adverse
Change to landscape character due to long-term installation of solar panels with associated infrastructure and fencing across Solar Development Sites 3 and 4, including the proposed 275 kV substation on Solar Development Site 4 (Field 4.4 as shown on Figure 2.3: Field Numbering Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.03]**). This will be across a large part of the western part of the LCA, creating a less rural character overall. Solar panels and associated infrastructure will reduce tranquillity in the LCA by introducing prominent built features of the Sites, reducing openness, removing vegetation. The impacts will be in the western sector, where multiple sites and corridors are concentrated, and existing boundary vegetation is weak. All disturbed areas, including hedges and trees lost to cable installation, will be reinstated or replanted post-construction. Across Cable Route Corridors there will be a slight change to landscape character in year 1 of operation as planting carried out to reinstate vegetation removed to facilitate construction will have been implemented but will not have established. There will also be some scarring of the landscape where soils are replaced but crops or grassland has not established.	The medium magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is not significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
Low	Minor adverse
By Year 15, the landscape character in the western part of the LCA will be changed by a strengthened framework of established trees and hedgerows, which will provide screening and integration of the solar panels, although the 275 kV substation at Solar Development Site 4, whist screened, will still have a detracting influence. The new planting will reinforce and connect existing landscape features, such as hedgerows and woodland blocks, creating a more robust and continuous green infrastructure network. While the openness of the landscape will not be fully restored, the prominence of the development will be substantially reduced, and the landscape will exhibit a more vegetated and ecologically rich character. The reinstated vegetation along Cable Route Corridors will have matured, returning the landscape fabric to the baseline.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the low sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 15 of operation, which is not significant.

2.15 LCA 14: Hambleton Sandstone Ridge

Table 2-29 LCA 14: Hambleton Sandstone Ridge - Baseline

Hierarchy	National Character Area	County Character Area	District Character Area
District	Humberhead Levels (NCA 39)	Levels Farmland (LCT 23)	LCA 14 Hambleton Sandstone Ridge
Source	**Part of Proposed Development**		
Selby Landscape Character Assessment 2019	CRC 1-4		

Summary	Determining the value attached to the landscape					
	Landscape designations	**Other relevant designations**	**Natural heritage**	**Cultural heritage**	**Landscape condition**	**Associations**
LCA 14 is defined by two wooded hills on a sandstone ridge: Brayton Barff (55 mAOD) and Hambleton Hough (46 mAOD), rising above surrounding land at 10–20 mAOD. Mixed woodland dominates the hilltops, with extensive cover between the hills, around the A63, Selby Golf Course, and Gateforth Hall parkland. This enclosed character contrasts with the district's open farmland. Arable fields are medium-scale, regular, and edged by intermittent hedgerow trees. Main settlements are Hambleton and Thorpe Willoughby, linked by the A63 and A1238; the A63 creates some severance. Gateforth, to the south, is a smaller historic estate village. Listed Buildings cluster in Hambleton and Thorpe Willoughby; Gateforth Hall is Grade II* with heritage parkland assets. The hills are valued for recreation, with car parks, marked footpaths, and extensive PRoW. Both offer panoramic views, including Selby Abbey and Brayton church to the east, and are designated LILAs for their distinct character and recreational importance.	Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff LILAs	Brayton Barff SINC and Ancient Woodland	Areas of woodland important for recreation and biodiversity, and also their relative rarity within the wider landscape. Though the central woodlands are most valued, the wider network of hedgerows and trees in this landscape also provides a network of green infrastructure.	Time-depth is focused around the parkland and estate landscape of the Grade II* listed Gateforth Hall, with its prominent avenue planting along the ridge east of Hambleton Hough, and its relationship to Gateforth village. More recent changes affect large parts of this area, with expanding settlements and transport corridors, although areas of older historic field boundaries can still be discerned.	Good condition overall, well managed woodland at Brayton Barff and Hambleton Hough and elsewhere managed farmland with hedgerow boundaries.	No strong cultural associations relevant to the character or value of the landscape have been identified.

Key characteristics	Distinctiveness	Recreational	Tourism	Perceptual (scenic)	Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Functional

• Distinctive low sandstone ridge, forming the only outcropping in the area. • Characterised by two low but distinct and densely wooded hills: Brayton Barff; and Hambleton Hough, which offer panoramic views. • Gently undulating low-lying arable farmland surrounds the hills, with rectilinear fields defined by low hedgerows and hedgerow trees. • Influence of the local transport network around Selby, although with many areas of woodland that mask these features. • Valued recreational area with good access from populated areas and a wooded countryside setting with associated sense of tranquillity.	Distinctive landscape, characterised by a wooded sandstone ridge, representing the only elevated land in the locality and contributing to strong sense of place.	The central hills are highly valued for local recreation, and both are served with small car parks and marked footpaths that are clearly well used. There is a PRoW network around both these hills, used for local recreation and by visitors to the area. Thorpe Willoughby is well connected to Brayton Barff and Brayton via an extensive network of PRoW while Hambleton Hough is linked by PRoW to Hambleton and Gateforth. However, there is no direct PRoW access between the two hills, with access being taken along Field Lane. Wider PRoW links through the area are also lacking.	Not associated with tourism.	The distinctive Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff are key landmarks across this area and beyond. Skylines are distinctly wooded looking up to these hills, with the avenue trees at Hambleton Hough also conspicuous. Panoramic views of the landscape are experienced from small areas at the top of both hills where there are gaps in trees, with distant views of the Yorkshire Wolds to the north. Relatively few prominent features are seen in these long views across the expansive levels farmland.	The wooded hill landscapes offer a high degree of tranquillity, despite the proximity to busy roads and settlements. Factors which contribute to tranquillity include the following. - openness of the landscape (freedom from development) - perceived naturalness of the landscape - areas of low noise. These are offset to a small degree by negative factors: - visibility and noise from some roads e.g. A63	A wooded and elevated landscape with strong functional links for recreation and important to the appreciation of the designated LILAs.
Summary of key landscape features	**Value attached to the landscape**		**Valued landscape**	**Susceptibility to change**		**Sensitivity**
Prominent wooded hills at Brayton Barff and Hambleton Hough. Low-lying arable farmland surrounds the hills, with rectilinear fields defined by low hedgerows and hedgerow trees.	High		Yes	High		High
	A locally designated landscape with strong indicators of value at prominent wooded hills and, in Brayton Barff, also including designations as ancient woodland and SINC, this is considered a valued landscape in the context of NPPF paragraph 187(a).			The central hills are distinctive landforms which are highly visible across the area and consequently susceptible to change. The flatter surrounding landscape is less susceptible, although in good condition overall. Away from the hills themselves, the density of woodland and stronger field boundaries, may confer a lower susceptibility to change, although any change should respect the setting of the hills.		The high sensitivity is based on the high value attached to the landscape and the high susceptibility to change

Table 2-30 LCA 14: Hambleton Sandstone Ridge - Assessment of effects

Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Construction (winter)	
High	**Moderate adverse (significant)**
None of the Solar Development Sites coincide with LCA 14, the closest being Solar Development Site 4 approximately 600 m to the south-west. Physical impacts on LCA 14 will be limited activities relating to the excavation of the CRC 1-4 . The corridor will run diagonally across the north-western part of the LCA, in a north-east to south-west direction, crossing the A63. The corridor will run diagonally across the lower lying fields in the northern part of the LILA designated area. Works will include temporary severance of field parcels and farm movements, excavation and temporary earthworks/topsoil storage locally affecting field pattern and surface texture, removal of up to seven trees, and removal of approximately 50 m of hedgerow along the southern side of Field Lane to allow for construction access. No veteran, ancient, or Category A trees, nor ancient woodland, will be removed. Buffers and root protection zones have been embedded in the design to protect these features. Construction Compound 4 will also be located within the Corridor west of Hambleton Hough and approximately 140 m away from the LILA designation, west of Hough Lane. The LILA designation and its key characteristics (wooded hills, panoramic views, and recreational value) will remain intact, as the Cable Route Corridor is routed and constructed to avoid significant permanent impacts on these features. The access to Hambelton Hough recreational paths will be maintained for most of the construction period, with only short-term closures with potential with minimal localised diversion to accommodate Cable Route Corridor construction. Construction will cause a reduction in relative tranquillity in the LCA. Noise for short periods and temporary lighting for construction during hours of darkness will also reduce tranquillity across the north-western part of the LCA. The duration of works will be short term and impacts will be reversible.	The high magnitude of impact, assessed against the high sensitivity of the receptor, will result in moderate adverse effects during construction, which is significant.
Year 1 operation (winter)	
Low	Minor adverse
No above ground structures are proposed in this area. In Year 1 of operation, the landscape will show some visible alteration as reinstatement measures will have been implemented, though the new planting will not yet be fully established. There will be a reduction in existing vegetation cover; however, this will be counterbalanced by the introduction of replacement hedge planting. There will also be some scarring of the landscape where soils are replaced but crops or grassland has not established. The distinctive wooded hills (Brayton Barff and Hambleton Hough), the main woodland blocks, and the overall topography of the sandstone ridge will be retained. No major landform alteration is proposed.	The low magnitude of impact, assessed against the high sensitivity of the receptor, will result in minor adverse effects during year 1 of operation, which is not significant.
Year 15 operation (summer)	
No change	No effect
There will be no perceptible change to the landscape after Year 15 as the reinstated vegetation along Cable Route Corridors will have matured, returning the landscape fabric to the baseline	No effects on the landscape resource after 15 years, which is not significant.

References

Ref 1 CPRE (2019) Tranquillity Mapping: Developing a Robust Methodology for Planning Support. Available at: [redacted] [Accessed February 2026]

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