

# The Drovers Solar Farm

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## Appendix 6.5: Evaluation of Landscape Value

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## 5.0 Appendix 6.5 Evaluation of Landscape Value

5.1.1. The Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02-21 *Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations* (2021) sets out at Table a range of factors that can be considered when identifying 'landscape value'.

5.1.2. The factors are not presented in order of importance and are not intended to be exhaustive. Landscape value, along with susceptibility, is one of two components of landscape sensitivity.

5.1.3. TGN 02-21 states:

GLVIA3 recognises that landscape value is not always signified by designation *"the fact that an area of landscape is not designated either nationally or locally does not mean that it does not have any value"* (Paragraph 5.26). GLVIA3 recommends that when undertaking a LVIA/LVA in an undesignated area, landscape value should be determined through a review of existing assessments, policies, strategies and guidelines and, where appropriate, by new survey and analysis (Paragraphs 5.27 and 5.28). It is recommended that the process for identifying landscape value outside nationally designated areas is based upon a structured and transparent assessment process including community-based evidence where practical to do so."

5.1.4. TGN 02-21 also states that key points to note are as follows:

- It would be expected that a 'valued landscape' would demonstrate the presence of a number of indicators of landscape value, as set out in **Table** [of TGN 02/21], although it is possible for one indicator to be of such importance (e.g. rarity, association or perceptual aspects) that the landscape is judged to be a 'valued landscape' even if other indicators are not present.
- The identification of landscape value needs to be applied proportionately ensuring that identification of 'valued landscape' is not over used."

5.1.5. The table below presents an evaluation of the Site and its context against the factors identified in TGN 02-21, drawing on a range of evidence such as that

identified as examples in TGN 02-21, and surveys undertaken specifically for the Site.

**Table 3: Evaluation of landscape value**

Definition	Indicators / Evaluation	Value
<b>Factor: Natural Heritage</b>		
Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	<p><u>Indicators:</u> The Site contains a number of features that contribute positively to the ecology of the landscape. These features include a high number of mature native hedgerows, some with mature hedgerow trees, all mostly connected as part of the internal Field boundaries. In turn, these are also connected to a number of plantation woodland blocks both within the Site and its immediate context. Alongside existing field boundary hedgerow and trees, the ecology habitat and ecological features plan submitted within ES Appendix 7.2: Baseline Ecological Survey Report <b>[APP/6.3]</b> shows that the Site includes a mixture of habitat such as: woodland, dense scrub, grassland, arable land, ponds and dry ditches. There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) or Ancient Woodland blocks situated within the Site.</p> <p><u>Evaluation:</u> The features identified within the Site are generally commonly found within the surrounding landscape. Whilst they contribute to the character of the Site and its immediate surroundings, they are not of any wider importance or value.</p>	<u>Community</u>
<b>Factor: Cultural Heritage</b>		
Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	<p><u>Indicators:</u> There are a number of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments situated to the north of the Site, associated with Castle Acre, South Acre and West Acre. The Site is considered to form part of their setting. There are a number of Grade I listed heritage assets within 3km of the Site. Several of the villages in the context of the Site, including Castle Acre and South Acre, have Conservation Areas.</p> <p>Narford Hall Registered Park and Garden is situated within 1km of the Site to the north-west.</p>	<u>Local</u>

Definition	Indicators / Evaluation	Value
	<p>A number of 'Droves' run through the Site which are of heritage interest.</p> <p>Evaluation: The features identified form part of the character of the surrounding context to the Site. However, none of the assets identified are considered to be of more than local value. There is some visibility between the Site and Castle Acre Castle and Castle Acre Priory to the north-east.</p>	
<b>Factor: Landscape condition</b>		
Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure.	<p><u>Indicators:</u> The Site is greenfield in nature, and of predominantly agricultural land use. Evidence of livestock farming exists within several Fields which comprise sheds, perimeter fencing and associated mid to low level infrastructure. The Site is well vegetated with a good network of interconnected hedgerow and woodland blocks.</p> <p><u>Evaluation:</u> The landscape within the Site is in good condition.</p>	<u>Community</u>
<b>Factor: Associations</b>		
Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts.	<p><u>Indicator:</u> There are limited indications of any connections with notable people, events or the arts within the Site.</p> <p><u>Evaluation:</u> There is no indication that the Site and its context within the main area of likely effects should be considered of higher value than other areas of land of a similar nature elsewhere in the local area.</p>	<u>Limited</u>
<b>Factor: Distinctiveness</b>		
Landscape that has a strong sense of identity	<p><u>Indicators:</u> The Site itself has some sense of identity as it comprises a well wooded plateau landscape, at the edge of the southern slopes of the Nar Valley. However there are no distinctive, rare or unusual features that confer to a stronger sense of place or identify. The Site forms a partial gateway to Swaffham from the north, along the A1065.</p> <p><u>Evaluation:</u> There is no evidence to indicate that the Site should be considered of a higher value than other areas of land of a similar nature elsewhere around Swaffham.</p>	<u>Community</u>

Definition	Indicators / Evaluation	Value
<b>Factor: Recreational</b>		
Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important	<p><u>Indicators:</u> There are a number of PRow and recreational routes within the Site that connect to other local PRow networks and long distance trails within the Site's context. The surrounding landscape is accessible by a number of interconnected PRow that exist between local villages in the surrounding landscape, as shown on <b>Figure 6.8 Amenity and Recreation Facilities [APP/6.3]</b></p> <p><u>Evaluation:</u> The high number of interconnected PRow and presence of long distance recreational routes within the Site and its immediate context indicate that the recreational value of the Site and surroundings would be of local value.</p>	<u>Local</u>
<b>Factor: Perceptual (Scenic)</b>		
Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense	<p><u>Indicators:</u> The Site is relatively visually contained in the central and southern areas and is of greenfield nature. In the Site's northern area, there are some views northwards across the Nar Valley towards heritage assets within Castle Acre. The context of the Site to the north, east and west is currently rural and generally typical of the surrounding landscape. Swaffham is situated to the south of the Site, however there is limited intervisibility between the Site and settlement. In the local landscape, passing traffic is visible and audible along the A1065 and A47. As such, these highways serve as detractors within the local landscape.</p> <p><u>Evaluation:</u> There is no evidence to indicate that the Site or its context contains any distinctive features or scenic qualities that appeal to the senses any more than the surrounding context.</p>	<u>Community</u>
<b>Factor: Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)</b>		
Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness,	<p><u>Indicators:</u> A degree of tranquillity is experienced in the vicinity of the Site. However, the nighttime? presence of Swaffham, adjacent villages and nearby A1065 to the east affect both tranquillity and any potential for dark skies. The agricultural</p>	<u>Limited</u>

Definition	Indicators / Evaluation	Value
tranquillity and/or dark skies	land within the Site has altered the landscape so that it cannot be considered wild. <u>Evaluation:</u> There is no evidence to indicate that the Site and its context experience dark skies or areas of wildness, and there is a limited tranquillity in the local area.	
<b>Factor: Functional</b>		
Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape	<u>Indicators:</u> There is some evidence to indicate that the Site (or its landscape elements) contribute to the 'healthy functioning' of the landscape. There are areas that form carbon sinks which comprise woodland areas present within the Site and its immediate context. The woodland character of the surroundings contributes positively to the healthy functioning landscape. <u>Evaluation:</u> Existing woodlands are evidence to indicate that the Site contributes to the 'healthy functioning' of the landscape. However there is no evidence to suggest that it should be considered of higher value to other areas of land of a similar nature elsewhere in the local area.	<u>Community</u>

- 5.1.6. TGN 02/21 makes clear at Paragraph A4.2.12 that “where possible the development plan should be referenced to support the value placed on the landscape. Where the development plan is silent, evidence should be provided in the form of professional analysis”.
- 5.1.7. On the basis of the evaluation above, the criteria are assessed as either of ‘Local’ value, ‘Community’ value or ‘Limited’ value. The landscape value of the Site and its immediate context should be considered of a ‘Community’ value, which is defined within the LDA methodology as an “*everyday landscape which is appreciated by the local community but has little or no wider recognition of its value*”.