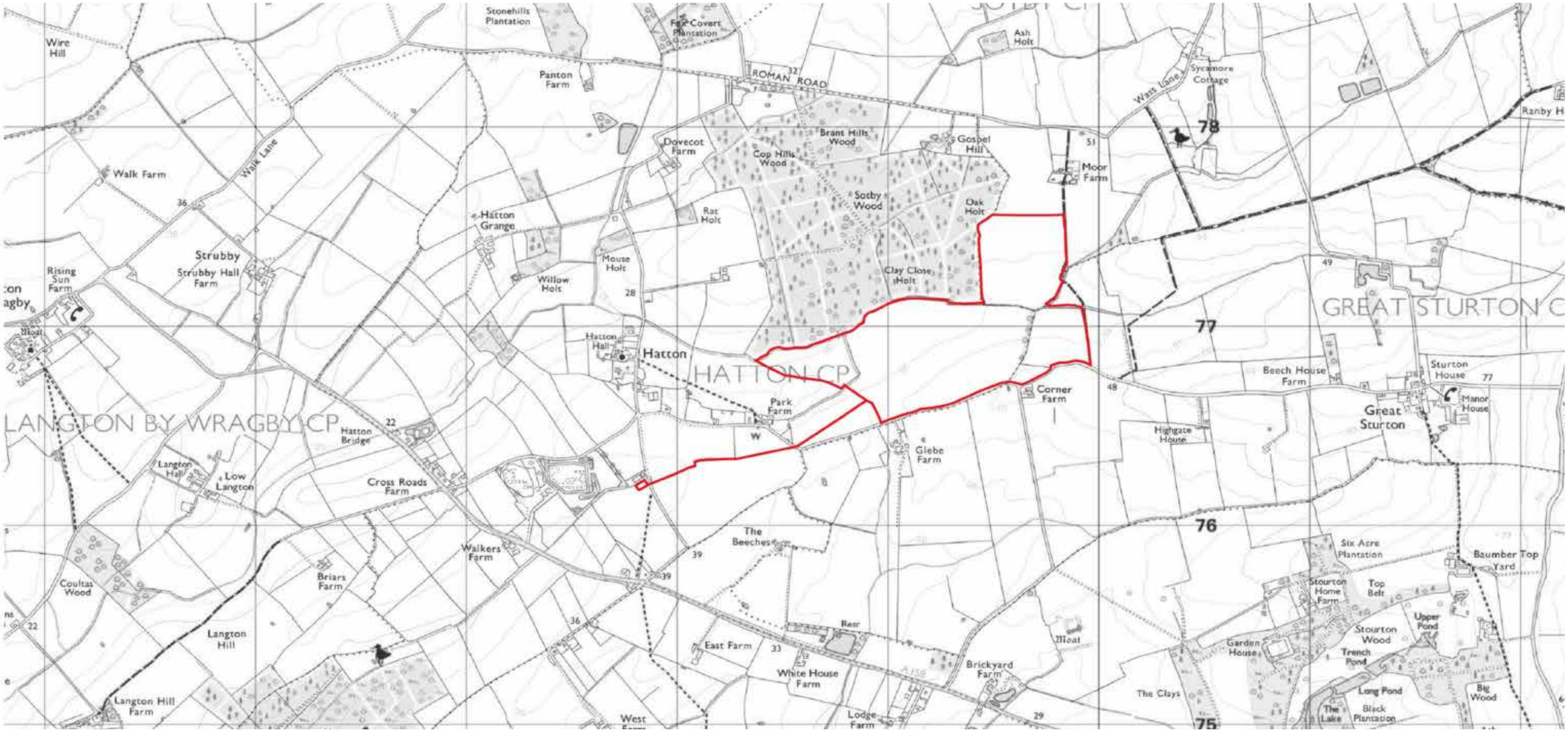
Land off Sturton Road, Great Sturton, Horncastle

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

On behalf of **SPD Studio**

December 2021



JAMES BLAKE ASSOCIATES

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Land off Sturton Road, Great Sturton, Horncastle

JAMES BLAKE ASSOCIATES

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 James Blake Associates Ltd. (JBA) has been instructed by SPD Studio to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to accompany an planning application for the Proposed development of a Solar Panel Farm and Ancillary Sub Station. The Application Site ('the site') is situated on Land off Sturton Road, Great Sturton, Horncastle, Lincolnshire.

1.1.2 The Site lies approx 32km south of Grimsby and 22km east of Lincoln.

Scope

1.1.3 The aims and objectives of this assessment are:

- To describe and evaluate the current landscape character of the site and its surroundings, including heritage assets, and identify potential landscape receptors with reference to published character types / areas and their characteristic landscape elements;
- To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to see the site and the proposed development) and their representative views;
- To evaluate the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors to the type of development proposed;
- To describe and assess any impacts of the development in so far as they affect the landscape and/or views of it and to evaluate the magnitude of change and the scale of effect; and
- To identify any specific mitigation or monitoring measures that are required to reduce residual landscape and visual effects.

1.1.4 The methodology for undertaking the assessment is in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) and best practice.

1.1.5 The assessment has been carried out as an integral part of the design process. The initial evaluation (baseline) was used to identify the landscape and visual constraints as well as opportunities of both the site and its surrounding landscape. The potential landscape and visual effects subsequently informed a landscape strategy that was incorporated into the development masterplan as primary/embedded mitigation through an iterative design approach.

1.1.6 As such the assessment and design process aims to ensure that:

- Aspects which make an essential contribution to landscape character are maintained and managed;
- The development and associated change can be accommodated within the existing landscape and visual context; and
- Improvements and enhancements can be made where uncharacteristic features detract from the character and visual amenity of the area.

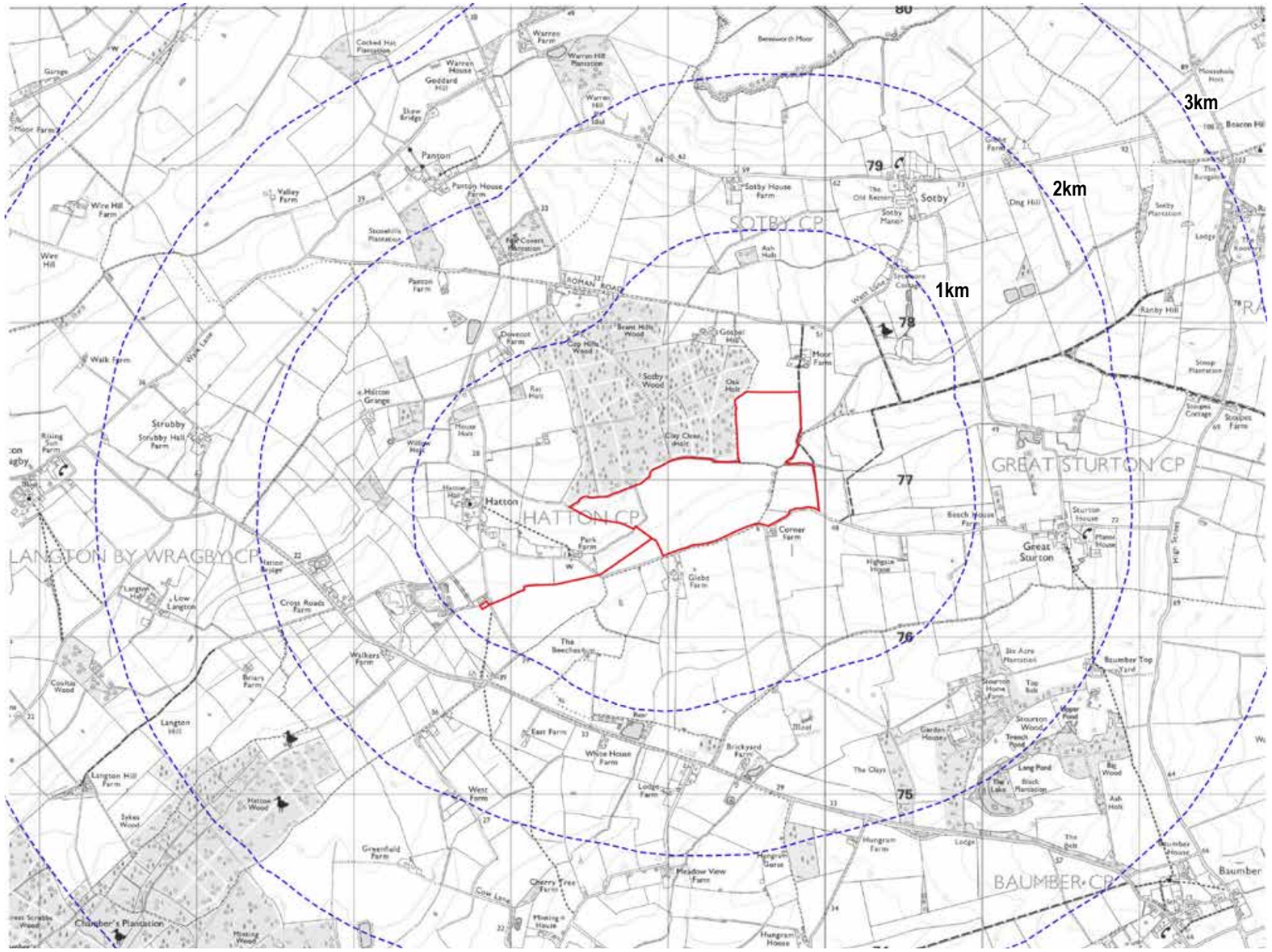

Figure 1: Site Location and Study Area. NTS
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1.2 Study Area and Landscape Context

1.2.1 The Site, which extends north of Sturton Road, a single track lane, and along its northern edge abuts Sotby Wood, represents redevelopment of greenfield land. The boundary of the Site and the extent of the study area are shown on **Figure 1**. The Site is made up of two large fields of arable farmland. The boundaries are typically mature hedgerow and are well vegetated, screening the majority of views in and out of the Site. The northern boundary is entirely screened by Sotby Woods. The proposals include for a small area of land to the south west of the Site to be developed for an ancillary Sub Station building, adjacent to an existing sub station. The Site, generally 'L' shape, is approx 79ha.

1.2.2 The extent of the study area is based on the potential visual envelope of the Site and proposed development i.e. the area from which views of the development may be visible, informed by topographical maps and field survey. The study area is shown on **Figure 1** and extends approximately 1km to the north east, south and south east, where views are then curtailed by the local topography and existing vegetation.

1.2.3 The landscape within the study area comprises the Central Lincolnshire Vale (NCA 44). More locally, the Site lies within the E1 Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland and is in close proximity to the G3 area of Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland (as identified by the Landscape Character Assessment of East Lindsey District Council).

1.2.4 For further details as relevant to this assessment refer to **Section 5.0**.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Background

2.1.1 This report identifies and assesses the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development over the course of the project from construction through to its completion.

2.1.2 Throughout the report a clear distinction is made between landscape (the landscape as a resource) and visual:

- **Landscape Assessment (Section 5.0)**: The landscape resource incorporates the physical characteristics or elements of the urban and rural environment which together establish the character of each area e.g. geology, soils, topography, hydrology, land cover, land use, vegetation and settlement and the way it is experienced. Landscape effects can arise from changes to individual landscape components, landscape character and sense of place. This includes effects on areas recognised for their landscape value.
- **Visual Assessment (Section 6.0)**: The visual assessment considers the nature of existing views and visual amenity including the extent of visibility of the site and the proposed development, and the people who might experience them. Visual effects considers how the views of individuals and how they are perceived will change.

2.1.3 The assessment of the site, the surrounding landscape character and visibility are based on a period of desk study and field survey.

2.2 Assessment Approach

2.2.1 The assessment of landscape and visual effects is based on the following good practice guidelines:

- Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland[1]; and
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3)[2].

2.2.2 In accordance with the guidelines and best practice, LVIA uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative information including informed and reasoned professional judgement. The assessment of the scale of landscape and visual effects follows a systematic and consistent step-by-step process so that rational and transparent conclusions can be drawn.

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1 Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002

2 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Third Edition 2013

2.2.3 In accordance with GLVIA3 the approach and methodology used is proportional to the scale of the project and the nature of the likely effects; the emphasis being on those that are likely to be important.

2.2.4 The process of LVIA is based on the following process:

- Baseline appraisal including desk based and field surveys to identify the nature of the existing resource. Sources of information for the desk study are listed in **Appendix A**;
- Identification of the individual receptors likely to experience change from the proposal and a description of the impacts, both negative and positive;
- An assessment of the scale of the effects identified; and
- Identification of mitigation or monitoring measures that may be required.

2.2.5 For the purposes of this report, the term 'impact' refers to the cause of the change and 'effects' are the results or changes on the landscape and visual context.

2.2.6 It is recognised that the scale and nature of the change will vary throughout the course of the project. To provide an indication of the changes that will occur through the various stages, the magnitude of change and scale of effect is assessed at the following key points:

- Construction phase – estimated duration of 6months. Parts of the development may be completed and occupied within this time;
- Completion Year 1 – to represent the worst case scenario, where planting has been implemented, but before any planted mitigation can take effect. This commences on the full practical completion of the proposed development; and
- Completion Year 15 – to represent the best case scenario, where planting mitigation measures can be expected to be effective. These are considered to be the residual effects.

2.2.7 In terms of the description of visual effects it is acknowledged that this will vary according to the season based on the extent of vegetation cover. The assessment at all stages is based on the worst case scenario when vegetation is not in leaf.

2.2.8 The LVIA process is an integral part of the design process. Following an initial assessment of the baseline, primary mitigation measures (for example the retention of vegetation, the location of buildings / open space, building heights and new planting) were embedded into the design of the development proposals as part of an iterative approach. These measures are identified in the description of the development. The assessment of landscape effects is based on the final submitted scheme.

2.3 Landscape Assessment

2.3.1 The assessment of landscape effects addresses the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource i.e:

- The landscape components within the site that contribute to the landscape - topography, land cover, land use, vegetation, settlement and buildings for example; and
- Landscape character and the key characteristics that contribute to it including aesthetic and perceptual aspects.

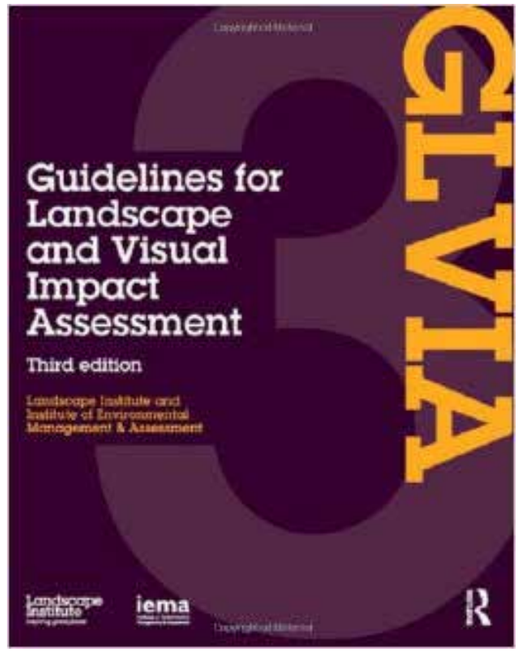


Plate 1: GLVIA3

Landscape Baseline

2.3.2 The baseline study includes a combination of desk and fieldwork in order to identify the existing character of the landscape, and the elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to it. Landscapes that share similar components and characteristics can be classified into generic Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and/or locational specific Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) at a range of scales from national through to local.

2.3.3 Within the study area a hierarchy of published Landscape Character Assessments has been undertaken. The study of the assessments within the hierarchy is important to aid understanding of the landscape and to allow the identification of landscape components that may be present at different scales.

2.3.4 Published assessments at the national and county level were reviewed to provide a broad landscape context. These existing documents were used to determine the extent of different LCTs and LCAs within the study area, along with their key characteristics, condition and inherent sensitivity to change along with any applicable management or development recommendations.

2.3.5 Field work was used to record the specific characteristics within the study area to determine the extent to which the site and its immediate surroundings are representative of the wider area, and to identify other characteristics potentially not identified in published documents, but which are important when considering the effects of the proposed development at a local level.

2.3.6 Following the baseline study, the potential landscape receptors (landscape components and character areas) were identified and their sensitivity to the proposed development assessed. Sensitivity is defined by a combination of value and susceptibility to change based on word based scales (for criteria refer to **Appendix B: Table B1**).

2.3.7 The value of each receptor is assessed taking into account the presence of statutory and non-statutory designations and the reasons for their designation, in conjunction with published Landscape Character Assessments and the findings of the baseline assessment including:

- The condition and overall strength of character of the site and its surrounding area;
- The importance, value or special qualities placed on the receptor; and
- The objectives of landscape strategies and guidance.

2.3.8 The susceptibility to the proposed development is assessed on:

- The capacity of the landscape to accommodate the proposed development;
- The extent of the proposals being in accordance with management or policy objectives; and
- The potential for mitigation.

2.3.9 The sensitivity of landscape components is classified on a sliding scale from high to low and is determined by combining value and susceptibility as set out in **Appendix B: Table B3.**

2.3.10 Those landscape components which make a notable contribution to the area and can not accommodate the proposed development without affecting the baseline situation and/or achievement of landscape planning strategies are of high sensitivity, while those which are replaceable or contribute little to the overall character of the landscape and can accommodate the change without affecting the baseline situation are of low sensitivity.

Identification and Description of Landscape Change

2.3.11 For each landscape receptor, the likely changes arising from the development during the construction and following its completion were identified and described. Such interactions include changes to or loss of existing elements, the introduction of new elements and the combined effect of these changes on the overall character of the area.

2.3.12 The magnitude of landscape impacts is classified on a sliding word based scale as set out **Appendix C: Table C1** from high to negligible. High is described as a prominent and notable change, while low or negligible applies where changes are small and/or localised. The nature of the impact can be positive or negative; however, there may be instances where an effect is neither. These effects are considered to be neutral in nature.

2.4 Visual Assessment

2.4.1 The visual assessment considers the direct effect of changes to existing views and the visual amenity arising from the proposed development.

Visual Baseline

2.4.2 The baseline for assessing visual effects establishes the area from which the site and proposed development may be visible and the nature and number of different groups of people who are likely to experience change.

2.4.3 For visual effects the receptors may include:

- Users of properties: such as residents, employees or visitors;
- Users of public rights of way: public footpaths, bridleways, byways and permissive paths;
- Users of transport routes: main roads and residential streets; and
- Places accessible to the public including open space areas, public gardens and other destinations.

2.4.4 The area from which the site and proposed development will be visible was determined using a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).

2.4.5 Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) data was sourced from the Environment Agency. LIDAR is an airborne mapping technique, which uses a laser to measure the distance between the aircraft and the ground. Up to 100,000 measurements per second are made of the ground, allowing highly detailed terrain models to be generated.

2.4.6 Composite data was used which is derived from a combination of the full dataset which has been merged and re-sampled. Due to gaps within the existing data, a combination of 50cm and 2m resolution was used in order to generate the best coverage.

2.4.7 Zones of Theoretical Visibility were plotted using two types of data. The first being a Digital Terrain Model (DTM) which represents the elevation of the bare earth without taking into account of any overground features. The second set of data used was the Digital Surface Model (DSM) which takes account of the height of features in the landscape (such as trees and buildings) as well as the topography of the land. Both sets of data were used to show how the intervening vegetation which surrounds the Site acts as a natural screen in both near and longer distance views.

2.4.8 This assessment assumes that the maximum height of development will be 8m with an assumed observer height of 1.65m (eye level).

2.4.9 In order to assess the theoretical visibility of the proposed development a set of points were plotted around the perimeter of the proposed development areas which will be refined at a reserved matters stage. These points are as accurate as reasonably possible when using the GIS software.

2.4.10 The search radius adopted was 5km. Across some parts of the study area no data was available, this data was given a value of 0 and as such the ZTV does not encompass these areas

2.4.11 The ZTV was then refined by manual analysis of topographical data combined with aerial images, this forms the visual envelope. As the extent of the VE is locally influenced by landform, vegetation and existing built development, fieldwork was used to verify the views actually available using publicly accessible locations.

2.4.12 The ZTV shows the cumulative effect a 8m high buildings at each of the points on the grid.

2.4.13 A number of viewpoints were selected for inclusion in the assessment to demonstrate the extent of visibility of the site and the future development as well as the visual amenity currently experienced. At each viewpoint, baseline photographs were taken to record the existing view. The viewpoints and supporting photographs do not provide continuous coverage of all locations within the vicinity, but provide a sample of the following:

- Representative: illustrating views from within a wider area e.g. views representative of a group of houses or a street or along a public right of way;
- Specific: demonstrating views from key locations such as visitor destinations or recognised viewpoints, views from protected landscapes or with particular cultural associations; and
- Illustrative: demonstrating a particular effect or specific issue e.g. restricted visibility in an area where views might be anticipated.

2.4.14 As such all views and visual amenity are best experienced in the field.

2.4.15 All photographs were taken during the day with a digital camera at a focal length of 35mm (equivalent to 50mm on a full frame sensor) and an eye height of 1.65m in accordance with technical guidance and best practice. To achieve a wider field of view, a series of overlapping photographs were taken, and later joined together to form panoramic images with minor retouching to eliminate slight variations in colour tone. For ease of reference, visible elements within the site and surrounding area, including the approximate extent of the site are identified.

2.4.16 Following the baseline study, the potential visual receptors were identified and their sensitivity to the proposed development assessed. Sensitivity is defined by a combination of value and susceptibility to change based on word based scales (for criteria refer to **Appendix B: Table B2**).

2.4.17 The value of existing views was identified taking into account the presence of statutory and non-statutory designations and with reference to other indicators such as their appearance in guidebooks or maps and the frequency of use.

2.4.18 The susceptibility of visual receptors is dependent on the location and context of the view, the number of people likely to be affected by the change, as well as the expectations and the occupation/activity of the receptor.

2.4.19 The sensitivity of visual receptors is classified on a sliding scale from high to low and is determined by combining value and susceptibility as set out in

Appendix B: Table B3.

2.4.20 Those receptors which are classified as being of high sensitivity may include users of rights of way or nearby residents, while those of low sensitivity may include people in their place of work or travelling through the landscape in cars or other modes of transport. The assessment of views from private residences, particularly those bordering the site, is based on representative views from groups of dwellings or streets based on the nearest possible publicly accessible location.

Identification and Description of Visual Change

2.4.21 Changes to views identified during the baseline study and the subsequent effect on visual receptors were identified and described with reference to the following:

- The nature of the view of the development e.g. a full or partial view, or only a glimpse;
- The proportion of the development or particular features that would be visible;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the site and whether the viewer would focus on the development due to its scale and/or proximity or whether it would comprise a small, minor element in a panoramic view;
- Whether the view is stationary/fixed, transient, or one of a sequence of views experienced along a route or moving vehicle; and
- The nature of the change resulting from the development through the removal or introduction of features (both natural and man-made) and any associated changes to the profile of the skyline, visual simplicity/complexity, enclosure/openness and scale.

2.4.22 The magnitude of visual effects is classified on a sliding scale as set out in **Appendix C: Table C2** from high to negligible where high is a prominent and notable change in the view to low or negligible where changes are small and/or barely perceptible. The nature of the impact can be either positive or negative; however, there may be instances where an impact results in an effect that is neither. These effects are considered to be neutral in nature.

2.5 Scale of Effects

2.5.1 The importance of landscape and visual effects is a function of the sensitivity of the landscape resource and visual receptors against the magnitude of change that they would experience. In accordance with GLVIA3, importance is not absolute and whilst a judgement is made on both the overall sensitivity of each identified receptor and the magnitude of change, the conclusion is based on the professional judgement of the assessor.

2.5.2 The nature and relative importance of the effects depends on the degree to which the development:

- Complements, respects and fits into the existing landscape and views;
- Enables the retention, enhancement or restoration of landscape character and visual amenity and delivers landscape guidelines and/or policy aspirations; and
- Influences the visual context and in particular strategic and important views.

2.5.3 The importance or scale of landscape and visual effects is determined by combining the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the change likely to occur. The scale effect is described as Major, Moderate, Minor or Negligible as set out in **Appendix C: Table C3**. Effects can be either adverse or beneficial.

2.5.4 The final assessment of the scale of effects can be summarised as:

- **Major adverse**: The development would cause a total permanent loss or major alteration to key elements or features of the landscape and/or introduce elements that are totally uncharacteristic of the surrounding area. The development would be visually intrusive and would result in a substantial deterioration to visual amenity;
- **Moderate adverse**: The development would cause a substantial permanent loss or alternation to one or more key elements or features of the landscape and/or introduce elements that are prominent but may not be substantially characteristic of the surrounding area. The development would be visually intrusive and would result in a noticeable deterioration to visual amenity.
- **Minor adverse**: The development would cause a minor permanent and/or temporary loss or alteration to one or more key elements or features of the landscape and/or introduce elements that may not be uncharacteristic of the surrounding area. The development would cause limited visual intrusion and would result in a barely perceptible deterioration to visual amenity;
- **Negligible**: The development would result in very limited change to the existing landscape resource or visual amenity.
- **Minor beneficia**l: The development would complement the key elements or features of the landscape and/or introduce elements that are characteristic of the surrounding area maintaining landscape character. The development would visually complement the existing view and would result in a barely perceptible improvement to visual amenity;
- **Moderate beneficial**: The development would fit in well with and enhance the key elements or features of the landscape and/or introduce elements that maintain and/or enhance landscape character. The development would visually integrate into the existing view and would result in a noticeable improvement to visual amenity;
- **Major beneficia**l: The development would entirely fit in well with and substantially enhance the key elements or features of the landscape and/or introduce elements that substantially enhance landscape character. The development would visually integrate into the existing view and would result in a substantial improvement to visual amenity.

2.6 Limitations and Assumptions

2.6.1 The visual survey and baseline photographs were completed in November 2021. The images represent a time when deciduous trees and hedgerows were not in leaf, representing a worse case scenario in terms of the extent of visibility likely to be experienced. Occasionally a clipboard utilised to screen the sun's glare is seen in the view.

2.6.2 The assessment assumes that the proposed development will be constructed over a period of 1 year. Although parts of the development will be completed and occupied within this time, this represents the construction phase. Operational effects commence on the full completion of the proposed development (Year 1).

2.6.3 In assessing both landscape and visual effects the influence of time, particularly on the growth of new vegetation, can be substantial. The post-completion effects have therefore been assessed at two stages (Year 1 and Year 15). The time that new planting takes to establish is dependent on species, stock size, the nature of the growing conditions and other factors such as maintenance and vandalism. It is assumed that planting will be implemented following the substantial completion of each phase and fully implemented by Year 1 with an average growth rate of 300-400mm/year.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The proposed development is for a solar PV farm development in order to provide renewable energy to Push Energy.

3.1.2 The development will consist of rows of solar panels mounted on a supporting metal frame and orientated to face south in order to maximise the benefit from the sun. The panels are composed of photovoltaic cells, which are designed to maximise the absorbency of the sun's rays whilst minimising solar glare.

3.2 Layout

3.2.1 To ensure the development can generate electricity efficiently, even during the winter months, the rows of solar panels will be spaced approximately 5m apart from panel edge to panel edge to prevent shading. The solar panels will also be angled at approximately 25 degrees to the horizontal. The lowest edge of the panels will be approximately 0.8m above ground level and the top edge of the panels will be no higher than 3m above ground level. The lowest edge of panels on mounds will be approximately 0.4m above ground level. The supporting metal frame will be hammered or driven directly into the ground to facilitate removal at the end of the operational phase.

3.2.2 All existing hedgerows, trees and tree belts will be retained, the panels requiring to be installed at a distance of 3m away from the hedgerows to avoid shadowing.

3.2.3 Construction and maintenance traffic will use the existing road system.

3.2.4 To protect the development, a perimeter fence will be erected around the development site. The fence will be approximately 2m in height, green plastic coated weld mesh security fencing. Matching gates will be provided at the vehicular access point. To secure the site 3.5m high CCTV camera poles will located at intervals along the fence.

3.2.5 Permissive footpaths run around the western and northern edges of the Site, along the edge of Sotby Wood on the northern boundary. These have wide margins of grass around the perimeter, aiding biodiversity.

3.2.6 The site will not be furnished with lighting columns or lighting of any kind.

3.2.7 The solar arrays and associated equipment and fencing would be removed and the land returned to agricultural use after 40 years.

3.3 Technical Details

3.3.1 The solar panel module would be of a type such as Hanwha Solar - Q Cells, with a module rated power of 240W. Each module is 1652 mm (length) × 1000 mm (width) × 45 mm (depth), set at a range of 20-30° utilising the Schletter FS Uno mounting system. Approximately a total site area of 100 acres/40ha, provides a total installed power of 20MW. Full details are to be confirmed. This Site potentially provides 79ha.

3.3.2 Each array will be arranged in two rows, running landscape (horizontally) and orientated to face south. There will be 3.5m between the back of one array and the start of the next. The actual width of each array will be about 1.4m.

3.3.3 The piles being driven into the ground will be 1.6m; 1m underground and 0.6m above. Then extensions are added on top. Overall the top of the modules will be 2.1m above the ground. The inverters are to be located underneath the panels. Connection to a substation and therefore connection to the grid will be via underground cables to link to a substation located off Panton Road and next to an existing substation for Hatton Gas Compressor.

3.3.4 The mounting system consists of galvanized steel mounting structures. Geotechnical surveys are carried out to ensure ground suitability. Each bay consists of a steel braced frame, made of galvanized cold formed steel sections. The span between the ground supports varies between 3000 to 4200mm. The mounting system is CE certified and suitable for the climate conditions of Europe.

3.3.5 Reflectivity issues such as glint and glare have been researched and information available demonstrates that there will be no effect. The solar panels are designed to absorb maximum light and therefore are a non-reflective surface. 'Glint' is the direct reflection of the sun and 'Glare' is a reflection of a bright sky and daylight. Glint is significantly brighter than glare.

3.3.6 Other potential infrastructure associated with the development, i.e. substation and monitoring house, will have a maximum height of approximately 4m for the substation / control room with the inverters and transformers being housed in small single storey buildings approximately 3m high. These are yet to be confirmed. The existing farm track network will provide satisfactory access to the site without the need for additional access or track ways.

3.3.7 From a landscape perspective, the proposals will maintain the existing field boundaries and include enhancement with additional native planting "gapping up" this existing vegetation framework. This will ensure a robust and consistent landscape buffer is achieved between the Proposed Development and the wider setting. The proposed additional hedgerow reinforcement will include a number of hedgerow trees and are to be included where there are gaps in the existing field boundaries, in addition there will be substantial offsets from the boundary that will incorporate wildflower zones.

3.3.8 The fields will retain the potential for grazing by sheep, continuing agricultural productivity and a practical method of keeping the grass and weeds at bay. Alternatively the whole grass meadow areas could be cultivated as wildflower meadow.

3.3.9 From a visual amenity perspective, the panels are non-reflective and incorporate a matte finish to the cells to ensure that glare from the sun is avoided. As such the panels adopt a dark grey / blue appearance that will change subtly depending on the atmospheric conditions.

3.3.10 An appropriate management regime will be adopted for the retained and proposed planting to ensure the establishment and long-term success of the landscape framework associated with the Site's boundaries. The enhancements arising from the proposed landscape strategy, sets out a number of key landscape principles, such as the proposed planting species will be locally native and in line with the published landscape character assessments and ecological recommendations. However it is considered that the specific details and any management regime would be conditioned as part of a planning permission

3.4 Decommissioning

3.4.1 The photovoltaic panels have an optimum working life of 40 years. After this time the site will be decommissioned and the panels removed. As the rows of panels are anchored into the Ground with steel spikes, these are relatively easy to remove, requiring no remedial works to return the land to arable agri-production as required.

3.5 Landscape Strategy

3.5.1 The Site benefits from an established landscape framework consisting of hedgerows, trees and treebelts. To augment this the Landscape Strategy proposed to be incorporated as part of Primary Mitigation, therefore incorporated as part of the development proposals, includes the following;

- Gaping up of old field access points where they are no longer required with mixed native hedgerow, species to match existing.
- Allow hedgerows around Site boundaries to gain a minimum height of 1.5-1.8m to reduce prominence of proposals from local surrounding road network.
- New proposed hedgerow to northern boundary on eastern half of the Site, where it cuts across the existing field. Mixed native hedgerow, species to match existing.
- New hedgerow boundary to south western boundary that cuts diagonally across the field. Mixed native hedgerow, species to match existing.

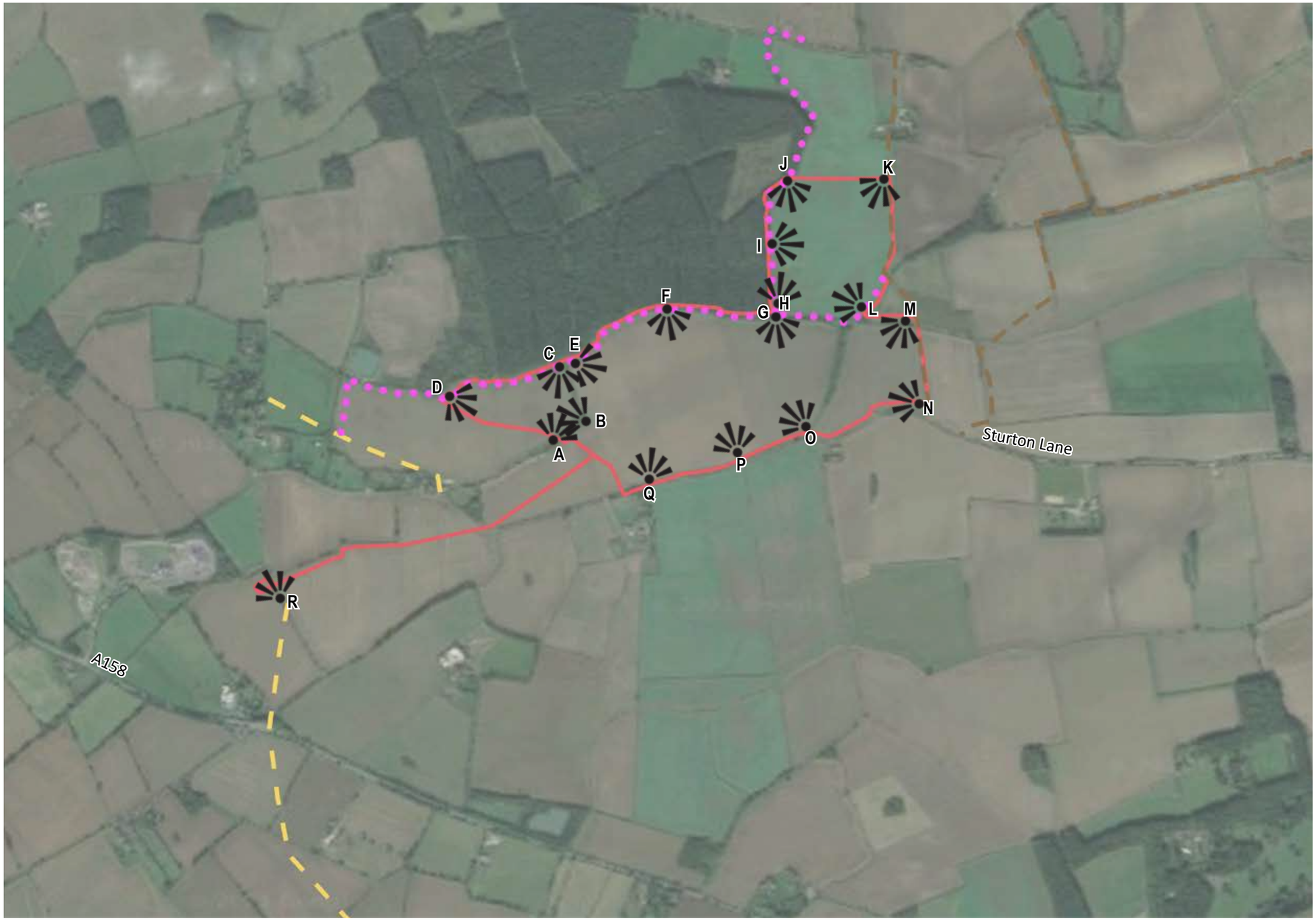


Figure 2: Site Views Location Plan. Scale NTS@A3
Source: Base Aerial Map: Google Maps, 2021

Viewpoint A: View north east across the Site towards Sotby Wood

Viewpoint B: View west from the corner field boundary, looking across the Site towards Hatton

Viewpoint C: View south west from the corner field boundary, looking across the Site

Figure 3: Site Views.
Source: JBA, November 2021

Viewpoint D: View south east across the Site with Sotby Wood forming the northern boundary

Viewpoint E: View south east across the Site with Sotby Wood forming the northern boundary

Viewpoint F: View south across the Site with Sotby Wood forming the northern boundary

Figure 3: Site Views.
Source: JBA, November 2021

Viewpoint G: View south across the Site towards Sturton Road

Viewpoint H: View north east across the Site with Sotby Wood forming the western boundary

Viewpoint I: View east across the Site with Sotby Wood forming the western boundary

Figure 3: Site Views.
Source: JBA, November 2021

Viewpoint J: View south east across the Site, with Sotby Wood forming the western boundary

Viewpoint K: View south west across the Site with Sotby Wood forming the western boundary

Viewpoint L: View north west across the Site with Sotby Wood forming the western boundary

Figure 3: Site Views.
Source: JBA, November 2021

Viewpoint M: View west towards the field boundary

Viewpoint N: View north west across the Site looking towards Sotby Wood

Viewpoint O: View north west across the Site towards Sotby Wood on the northern boundary

Figure 3: Site Views.
Source: JBA, November 2021

Viewpoint P: View north across the Site to Sotby Wood forming the northern boundary

Viewpoint Q: View north across the Site to Sotby Wood forming the northern boundary

Viewpoint R: View west across the Site to the existing Sub Station for the Hatton Gas Govener

Figure 3: Site Views.
Source: JBA, November 2021

Figure 4: Proposed Red Line Boundary. Scale NTS@A3
Source: SPD Studio 2021

- New hedgerow boundaries to new substation located off Panton Road. Mixed native hedgerow, species to match existing.

4. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 Background

4.1.1 This section provides an overview of planning policy as relevant to landscape. The assessment includes the identification of both statutory and non-statutory designations within the study area (including protected landscapes, historical and ecological assets).

4.1.2 The assessment considers the following:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019;
- East Lindsey Adopted Local Plan 2018 - Core Strategy;

4.1.3 The application site lies off Sturton Road, Great Sturton. The site does not sit within any landscape designations (see **Figure 5).**

4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework

4.2.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF sets out a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a 'golden thread' running through plan-making and decision-taking. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

4.2.2 NPPF Section 3: Plan-making states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led, and sets out the need for Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and other Supplementary Planning Documents to succinctly set out the development needs and plans specific to the area they relate to. This section also emphasises the opportunities and platforms in which local people can shape their surroundings.

'once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.'

4.2.3 NPPF Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy sets out that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Planning Policies should:

'*set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;*

'*set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;'*

'seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan.'

4.2.4 Supporting a prosperous rural economy: Planning Policies and decisions should enable:

'*the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas'*

'the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses'

4.2.5 NPPF Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities sets out that planning decisions should achieve healthy, inclusive and safer places. An emphasis is placed on a number of design strategies to facilitate a holistic approach to community well-being. These include:

'Promotion of social interaction through the use of 'mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, streetlayouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages.'

'Promotion of community of safety through the use of 'attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.''

'Promotion of strategies and features to support healthy lifestyles through 'the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

'Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.'

4.2.6 NPPF Section 11: Making effective use of land: Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

Planning policies and decisions should:

'encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains– such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside.'

4.2.7 NPPF Section 12: Achieving well-designed places sets out that high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, that are safe, inclusive and accessible are fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. As such all new developments should

'function well and add to the overall quality of the area..;' be 'visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping' and 'sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting'.

4.2.8 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF states, *'To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences'.*

These design guides will provide a framework 'for creating beautiful and distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design'. Landowners and developers may contribute to these exercises, but may also choose to prepare design codes in support of a planning application for sites they wish to develop.

4.2.9 Trees are also identified, in paragraph 131, as making important contributions to the character, quality and environmental credentials of urban environments, as such, *'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newlyplanted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.'* These principles are supported by NPPG 26: Design.

4.2.10 NPPF Section 14: Renewable Energy - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change states in Paragraph 152 that *'the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future... and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure'* . Paragraph 155 goes on to states that *'to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:*

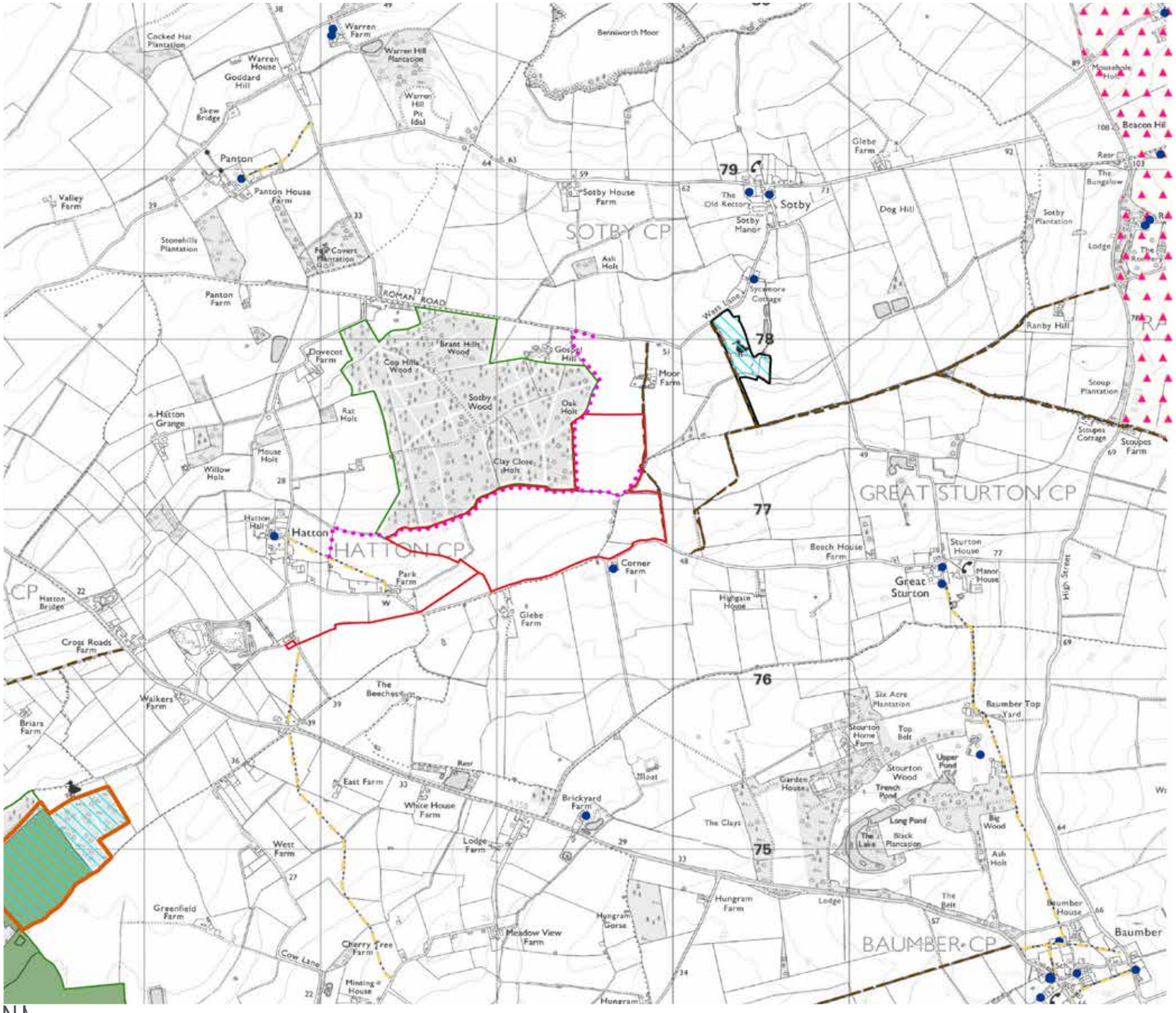
a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);

b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and

c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

4.2.11 NPPF Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment sets out that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. This includes designated landscapes but also the wider countryside. In this respect Local planning authorities could achieve this by

'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes'; 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services' and *'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity'.*



KEY

- Site Boundary
- PRoW Footpath
- PRoW Bridleway
- Permissive Footpath
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Ancient Woodlands
- CRoW Dedicated Land
- National Nature Reserve England
- Listed Buildings

N

Figure 5: Designations Plan. Scale: 1:20,000 at A3.

Great weight should be given to *conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues*

'The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.'

4.2.12 NPPF Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment places emphasis on the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, recognising that *'heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource'* and should be *'conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance'*. These principles are supported by NPPG 18a: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

4.2.13 Considering Potential Impacts- Whilst this report does not assess impacts on heritage assets, it is mindful of NPPF Section 16, which also notes that *'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'*

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.'*

4.3 District Level Planning Policy

East Lindsey District Planning Policy

4.3.1 The Adopted Local Plan 2018 - Core Strategy of the East Lindsey District sets out the planning vision and strategic policies for the growth and development of the District up to 2031.

- Strategy Policy 23 (SP23) - Landscape
  - *The District`s landscapes will be protected, enhanced, used and managed to provide an attractive and healthy working and living environment. Development will be guided by the District`s Landscape Character Assessment and landscapes defined as highly sensitive will be afforded the greatest protection.*
  - *The Council will ensure that the distinctive character of the District's landscapes whether they are of cultural, natural or historic significance, will not be compromised. In particular, the highest level of protection will be given to the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which is designated at a national level because of its landscape quality.*
  - *The Council will support development that conserves and enhances designated and historic landscapes (Winceby Battlefield, Lincolnshire Wolds, Coastal Country Park, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens, setting of listed buildings within the landscape) as focal points for widening and improving the visitor experience.*
- Strategic Policy 24 (SP24) - Biodiversity and Geodiversity
  - *Development proposals should seek to protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity value of land and buildings, and minimise fragmentation and maximise opportunities for connection between natural habitats.*
  - *The Council will protect sites designated internationally, nationally or locally for their biodiversity and geodiversity importance, species populations and habitats identified in the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Development, which could adversely affect such a site, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances:*
    - *In the case of internationally designated sites, where there is no alternative solution and there are overriding reasons of public interest for the development;*
    - *In the case of nationally designated sites, there is no alternative solution and the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the biodiversity value of the site; or*
    - *In the case of locally designated sites, and sites that meet the criteria for selection as a Local Site, the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the need to protect the site in the long term.*
- Strategy Policy 25 (SP25) - Green Infrastructure
  - *The Council will safeguard and deliver a network of accessible green infrastructure by:*
    - *Protecting and safeguarding all greenspace identified through the Settlement Proposals DPD so that there is no net loss;*
    - *Maximising opportunities for new and enhanced green infrastructure and publically accessible open spaces in andaround all communities;*
    - *Seek opportunities to connect existing green infrastructure to improve the network of spaces and accessibility for both the local population and wildlife.*
  - *Where the Council does support development on an existing piece of green space identified through the Settlement Proposals DPD, it will be a condition of that permission that an equivalent piece of green space is provided in terms of size, type and accessibility to the community so that there is no net loss.*
- Strategy Policy 27 (SP27) - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
  - *Large-scale renewable and low carbon energy development, development for the transmission and interconnection of electricity, and infrastructure required to support such development, will be supported where their individual or cumulative impact is, when weighed against the benefits, considered to be acceptable in relation to:*
    a) residential amenity;
    b) surrounding landscape, townscape and historic landscape character, and visual qualities;
    c) the significance (including the setting) of a historic garden, park, battlefield, building, conservation area, archaeological site or other heritage asset;
    d) sites or features of biodiversity or geodiversity importance, or protected species;
    e) the local economy;
    f) highway safety; and
    g) water environment and water quality
  - *Development within or affecting the setting of the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and landscape areas defined as highly sensitive within the East Lindsey Landscape Character Assessment, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where the development is in the public interest and considering the following:*
    a) The need for the development, including any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy; and
    b) the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
    c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be satisfactorily moderated.

4.4 Other Guidance

4.4.1 **Joint Core Strategy Green Infrastructure Strategy SPD (June 2014)**

4.4.2 *'The fundamental aim of GI is to deliver a higher quality of life for people who live, work and visit in the JCS area, as well as providing a sustainable habitat for wildlife. It does this through providing economic, social and environmental benefits.'*

5. LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

5.1 Scope

5.1.1 In accordance with National and Local guidance, this section considers the existing landscape character of the site and its environs.

5.1.2 The character of the landscape evolves over time as a result of the interaction of human activity and the natural environment (people and place). Factors used to assess landscape character include:

- Physical – geology, land-form, climate, soils, fauna and flora;
- Cultural and Social – land-use, settlement, enclosure & history;
- Aesthetics – colour, texture, pattern, form and perception.

5.1.3 It should be noted that landscape is a continuum and character does not generally change abruptly on the ground. More commonly, the character of the landscape will change gradually and therefore the boundaries between both Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) should be considered to reflect zones of transition.

5.1.4 The published LCTs and LCAs from the national to local level within the study area are shown on **Figure 6** and are summarised in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Hierarchy of Landscape Character Types and Character Areas

National: National Character Area Profiles, Natural England, 2012
NCA 44 Central Lincolnshire Vale
County: **Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for Lincolnshire 2011**
WOL5 The Western Wolds Foothills LCT
District: **East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment 2009**
E1 Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland

5.2 National Character Baseline

5.2.1 At the national level (Natural England, 2013) the study area lies within the Central Lincolnshire Vale Area (NCA 44).

5.2.2 The Central Lincolnshire Vale Character Area (NCA) Lies between the higher ground of the Northern Lincolcnshire Edge with Coversands NCA to the west and the Lincolnshire Wolds NCA to the East, it also adjoins the flat landscape of The Fens NCA in the south while its short northern edge merges with the Humber Estuary NCA.

5.2.3 Key Characteristics of the Central Lincolnshire Vale National Character Area (NCA 44) of relevance to the proposals include:

- *'Predominantly broad, low-lying, very gently undulating arable vale with a bedrock, chiefly of Jurassic mudstones and almost entirely covered by a variety of superficial deposits, largely of glacial till(boulder clay), and with the Wolds scarp providing an often prominent boundary to the east.'*
- *'Seasonally waterlogged loamy clay soils, grading to deeper calcareous loams towards the Wolds and contrasting with deep acidic sandy soils on the Fen Edge Gravels and the wind-blown Coversands.'*
- *'A landscape crossed by many streams flowing from the Wolds towards the heavily modified courses of the main rivers: the straight course of the canalised River Ancholme which flows north into the Humber and the similarly modified River Witham which flows south to The Wash.'*
- *'Woodland cover is variable with little on the central and northern clay soils, much more on the Coversands and Fen Edge Gravels including extensive conifer plantations, while there is a concentration of ancient lime woodland between Wragby and Bardney.'*
- *'Land used mostly as arable farmland with pasture on the heavier clays and around villages.'*
- *'In general, a regular pattern of medium to large-sized arable fields with hawthorn-dominant hedgerows enclosing most fields and with few hedgerow trees. Significant variation found on the Coversands and Fen Edge Gravels where field boundary trees are a feature, and on the flat land of the Ancholme Valley where rectilinear fields tend to be divided by ditches and dykes.'*
- *'Very limited semi-natural habitat, most being lost through drainage and commercial agriculture and forestry; however, significant remnants of lowland heath and acid grassland survive on the Coversands and Fen Edge Gravels, and Bardney Limewoods represents England's biggest concentration of ancient small-leaved lime-dominated woodland.'*
- *'A deeply rural, tranquil landscape with sparsely distributed small nucleated settlements and isolated farmsteads linked by an extensive but sparse network of minor roads and tracks with few major roads.'*
- *'A variety of recreational assets including routes within the Lincolnshire Limewoods, several Forestry Commission managed plantations and woodland sites, the Viking Way long-distance footpath, Woodhall Spa,Tattershall Castle and waterborne recreation provided by the rivers Witham and Ancholme and some flooded gravel pits.'*

5.3 County Character Baseline

5.3.1 The Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for Lincolnshire shows that the Site lies within the The Western Wolds Foothills Character Type.

5.3.2 **The Western Wolds Foothills**

5.3.3 Key characteristics of Western Wolds Foothills include:

- *'Settlements are generally very small with very little modern developmen within or around them.'*
- *'Several isolated farm complexes, close to areas of ancient enclosure, suggesting that they are the remains of deserted settlements'.*
- *'Most of the field patterns have been influenced by modern boundary removal resulting in large irregularly shaped fields.'*
- *'Ancient enclosures found most frequently in the south of the character area, typically small fields with irregular shapes are and often used for grazing or as paddocks for horses.'*
- *'To the south there are a high density of modest country houses with small parklands, under pasture but retaining its historic character. There are several areas of woodland associated with these parks, which form distinctive belts of trees around their boundaries.'*

Landscape Condition

- *'Pastoral and arable fields, hedgerows, woodlands, country estates and parkland, rivers and streams, all contribute to the perception of a quiet and deeply rural area.'*
- *'The planned enclosure landscape is quite well preserved throughout the area.'*
- *'Some boundaries have been removed although the resulting modern fields retain a strong rectilinear character.'*

Past, Present and Future Trends for Change:

- *'Modern residential development is affecting the historic villages and hamlets, eroding their architectural and historic character.'*
- *'Localised settlement expansion and infilling has often occurred following formulaic designs with minimal consideration to the local vernacular'*
- *'Evidence of abandonment of farms and cottages, along with depopulation of some rural villages, due to the isolation and lack of local services.'*

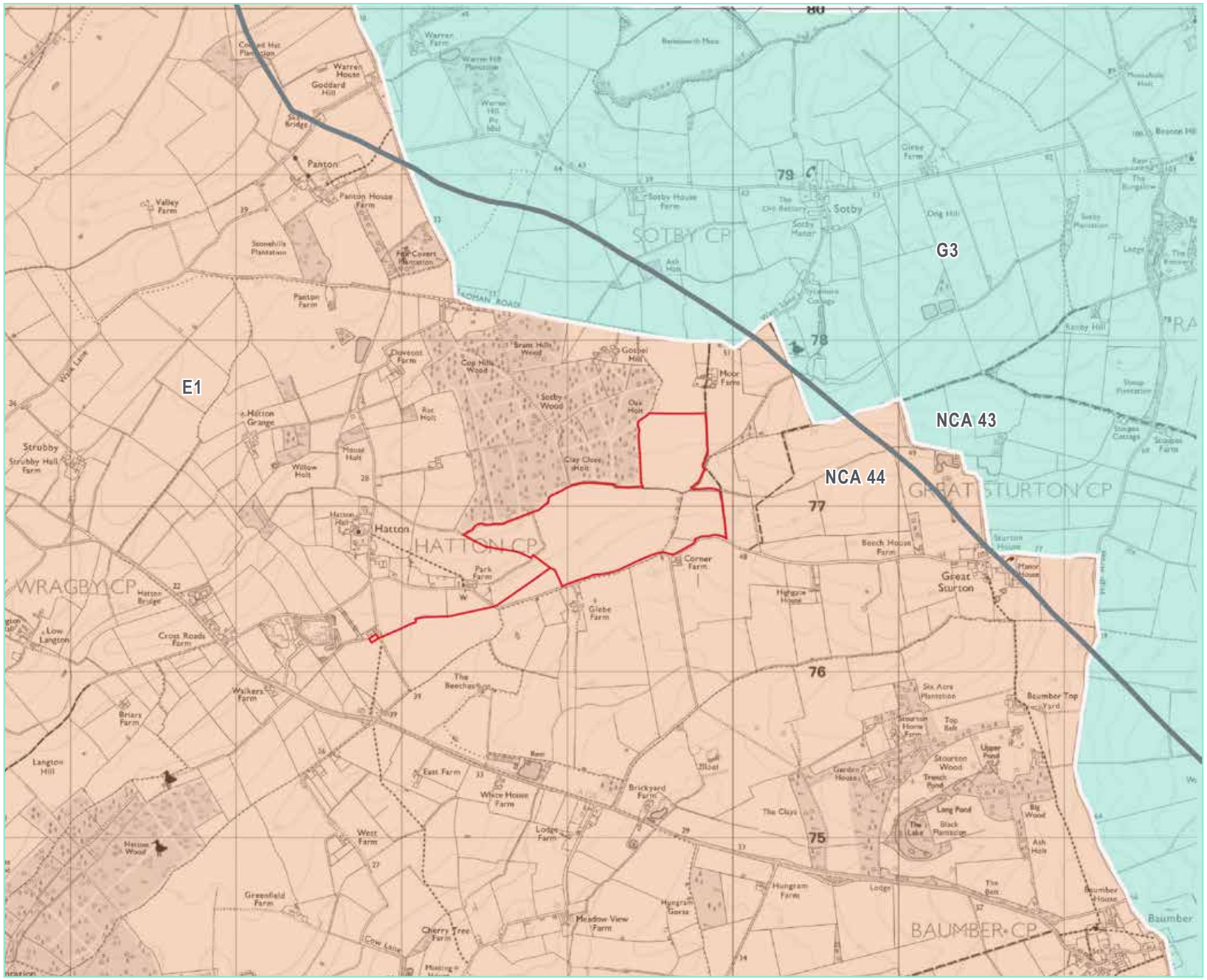
5.4 District Character Baseline

5.4.1 The East Lindsey Landscape Character Assessment shows that the Site lies within the E1 Wragby to Hosington Vale Woodland and Farmland Character area.

5.4.2 **E1 Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland**

5.4.3 Key characteristics of the E1 Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland include:

- *'An open, fluted and gently rolling broad vale intersected with small valleys draining mostly into the fens to the west and a few towards the Wash Basin in the south;'*
- *'A patchwork of medium to large mixed agricultural fields, with smaller pastoral fields in irregular patterns around small villages and hamlets;'*



KEY

Site Development Boundary

Landscape Character Boundary

NCA 44 Central Lincolnshire Vale

NCA 43 Lincolnshire Wolds

Landscape Character Assessment of East Lindsey

E1 Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland

G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland

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Figure 6: Landscape Character Plan. Scale 1:25 000 @ A3.

- *'Trees are an important element in the landscape with scattered ancient lime woods, small mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland blocks and strips, as well as frequent hedgerow trees;'*
- *'Settlements include the busy historic market town of Horncastle and widely scattered hamlets, villages and farmsteads;'*
- *'Scattered scheduled monuments and heritage features;'*
- *'A distinctive intact and peaceful rural landscape with very few detractors.'*

5.4.4 Key Forces for Change within the LCA include:

- *Introduction of biomass crops such as Miscanthus;*
- *Expansion on Horncastle's outskirts, including recreational and industrial developments;*
- *Fragmentation of Lincolnshire Limewoods halted due to increasing management and protection;*
- *Intensification of agriculture and farm amalgamation has resulted in an increase in field size and loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;*
- *New roadside tree and hedgerow planting;*
- *Countryside and Environmental Stewardship Schemes, affecting the vegetation and appearance of hedgerows, field edges and dykes, through changed management and farming practices;*

5.4.5 The East Lindsey Landscape Character Assessment shows that the neighbouring LCA within the study area is G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland.

5.4.6 Key characteristics of the G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saint Wolds Farmland include:

- *'Elevated undulating landscape of ridges, wide and narrow valleys, plateaux and scarp.'*
- *Mixed agriculture which is mostly fields of wheat with some pasture around villages and on steeper slopes.*
- *Mature hedgerows with trees and occasional blocks of woodland scattered throughout.*
- *Sparsely populated with small villages nestled into valleys and a market town at Spilsby.*
- *Estates surrounded by parkland, and woodland with distinctive estate cottages and farmsteads.*
- *Many heritage features including archaeological earthworks, medieval ruins, and a battlefield.*
- *A network of winding lanes and drove roads with wide verges.*
- *The A158 provides a fast east-west route across the area.*
- *Several telecommunications masts including the prominent Belmont mast are prominent landmarks.*
- *A very tranquil rural landscape with few detractors.*

5.4.7 Key Forces for Change within the LCA include:

- Intensification of agriculture and farm amalgamation has resulted in increases in field size and loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Some small scale modern housing developments in villages.
- Occasional new tree and hedgerow planting along roadsides.
- Satellites and telecommunications masts.
- Introduction of chicken farms with large agricultural sheds especially at Belchford.
- Countryside and Environmental Stewardship Schemes, affecting the vegetation and appearance of hedgerows and field edges through changed farming and management practices.

5.5 Landscape Management Guidelines

National: NCA Statements of Environmental Opportunity

5.5.1 Statements of Environmental Opportunity for the Central Lincolnshire Vale of relevance to this proposal include:

- SEO 1: *'Restore natural watercourse and flood plain functionality within the Vale, ensuring no harm to archaeological assets, and seek habitat creation and linkages and land management changes through the area, to improve resilience and ecosystem capacity to regulate water quality, regulate water flow and reduce soil erosion. This will also enhance riverine character, recreational experience and ecological connectivity.'*
- SEO 2: *'Protect and enhance the rural character and tranquillity of the Vale, much valued for their contribution to sense of place, inspiration and recreation. Ensure that new development is informed by local assessments, opportunity and mapping studies to help to minimise impact and maximise environmental gain through good design and appropriate screening, and promote green infrastructure links to ensure that the surrounding settlements have access to the many recreation assets which contribute to the health and wellbeing of both residents and visitors.'*
- SEO 4: *'Improve the environmental sustainability of agriculture within the Vale and enhance the capacity of natural ecosystems to support the long-term provision of food, improve soil quality, enhance water quality (especially in the Ancholme basin), provide habitat for pollinators, enhance farmland habitats and benefit climate regulation.'*
- SEO 5: *'Protect and enhance the historic character of the Vale including the monastery sites, shrunken medieval villages, parklands and villages. Increase awareness of the richness of this resource, protect it from neglect and physical damage, and ensure that future development complements and enhances the sense of history.'*

District: The East Lindsey Landscape Character Assessment

5.5.2 Land Management guidelines for Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland (E1) include:

- *'The scale and character of any new development should fit with the existing pattern of hedgerows and tree cover and dispersed small scale settlements.'*
- *The location of new developments should take advantage of the screening provided by the existing landform and tree cover and should be concentrated around existing settlements to prevent loss of the rural landscape.'*
- *'The overall landscape character sensitivities of the adjacent character areas should be taken into account when deciding upon the appropriateness of development within this landscape character area as well as the potential effects on tranquillity and dark night skies.'*

5.5.3 Land Management guidelines for G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland include:

- *Any development should be carefully designed tp fit in with the pattern, scale and character of existing landscape elements.*
- *The location of new developments should take advantage of the existing screening elements which are characteristic to the area.*
- *Development on hill tops and also along skylines should be avoided.*
- *'The overall landscape character sensitivities of the adjacent character areas should be taken into account when deciding upon the appropriateness of development within this landscape character area as well as the potential effects on tranquillity and dark night skies.'*

Local Character

5.5.4 *Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland* sits on the western edge of East Lindsey District, adjacent to West Lindsey and North Kesteven Districts. The Valeside extends from the edge of the fens in the Witham Vallge in the west and rises to *Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland* in the east. It extends down to *Woodhall Spa to Coningsby River Terrace* in the South.

5.5.5 The landscape has some enclosure due to the landform, frequent small woodlands, and lines of mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees. There are some more intimate pastoral semi-enclosed views particularly in the small valleys.

5.5.6 The fabric of this agricultural landscape is based on a patchwork of fields and woodland interwoven with mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees and scattered rural settlements and farmsteads. Parts of the eastern edge of the area are designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value.

5.5.7 Busy A roads run across the area including the A158 linking east and west Lincolnshire, and the A153 running along the River Basin corridor towards Woodhall Spa. There is a good network of public rights of way in the southern portion of the character area but less so in the north. The National Cycle

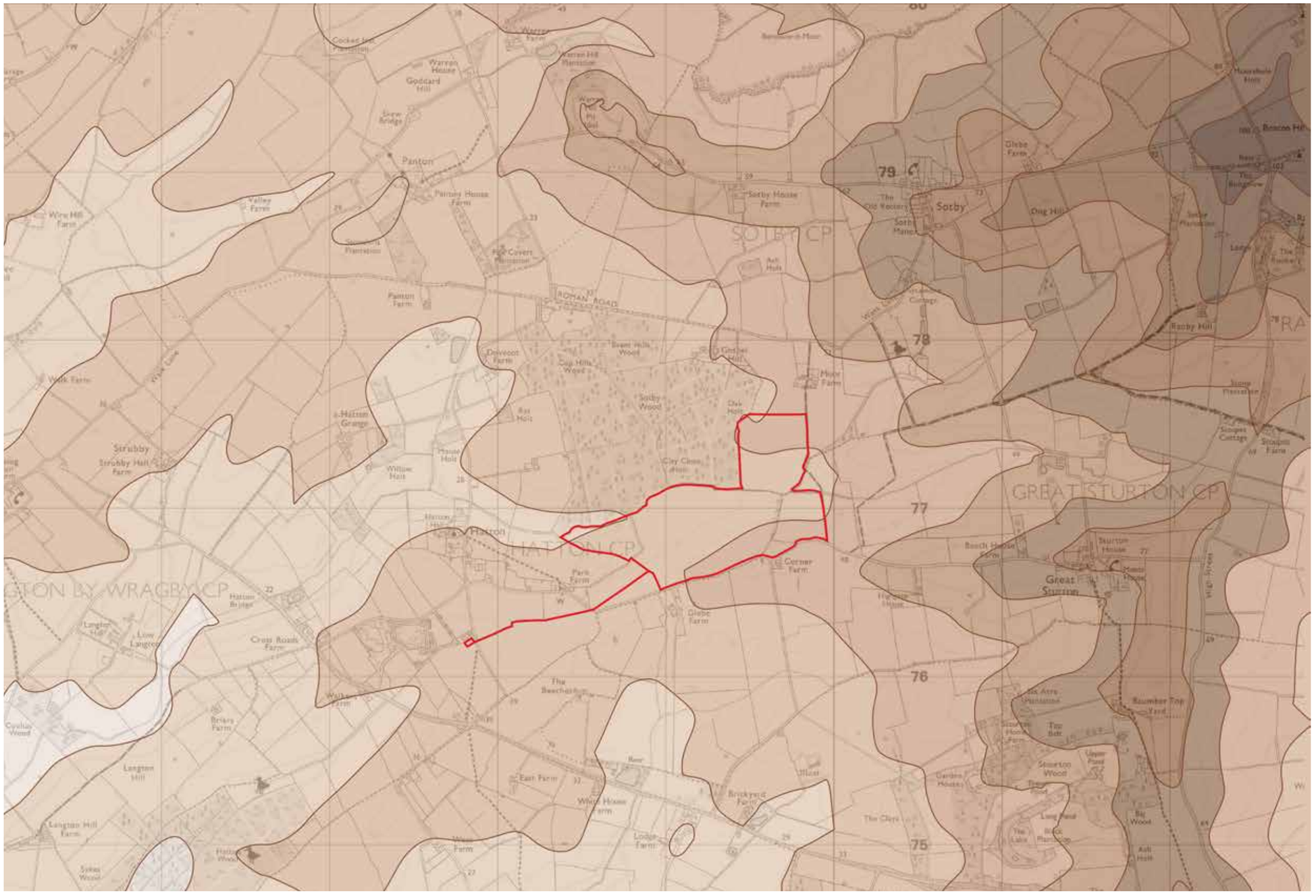


Figure 7: Landform Analysis. Scale 1:20 000 @ A3.

Route Number 1 passes through the western edges and the Viking Waking long distance footpath runs along the River Basin embankment through Horncastle and beyond.

G3 - Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland

5.5.8 The character area streches from the boundary with West Lindsey District and the A631 border with Binbrook to Tedford Wolds Farmland in the north to *Mareham to Little Steeping Fenside Woodland and Farmland* in the south. To the west it is bordered by *Wragby to Horsington Vale woodland and farmland*.

Historical & Cultural Influences

5.5.9 Great Sturton itself is a hamlet with only twelve houses and 40 residents.

5.5.10 The local church is dedicated to 'All Saints' and is grade II listed, dating back to the 11th century.

5.5.11 Both middle and late bronze age spearheads were found at Great Sturton.

5.5.12 The first Sturton Hall is a grade II listed ruin. The house was desererted in 1810 when a new hall was built in Sturton Park.

E1 - Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland.

5.5.13 There are features typical of open field farming development during the medieval and early post medieval periods – namely the nucleated settlement pattern and some ancient enclosure and extant ridge and furrow focussed around the settlement cores.

5.5.14 Some of the apparent dispersed settlement pattern in the character zone is probably due in part to settlement desertion and shrinkage. In the fourteenth century there was a combination of economic decline, worsening climate and repeated outbreaks of plague, all of which led to a general decline in rural populations.

5.5.15 Some settlements were abandoned while others experienced substantial reductions in size. Additional factors which may have led to abandonment and shrinkage of these settlements in later centuries included the enclosure of ploughlands, pastures and commons as a result of increases in the price of wool.

5.5.16 Settlement is sparse and dispersed with a small number of nucleater villages and hamlets scattered throughout. Traditional architecture is typically red brick and pantile roofs with some variations such as yellow brick and white painted plaster. Horncastle is a larger historic market town with roman origins. It has an intact eighteenth and nineteenth century core and sprawling industry and mixed use areas on its outskirts.

5.5.17 Other heritage features include thatched mud and stud cottages lining the main street of Thimbleby, traditional red brick and pantile farmstead which are falling into disrepair, and runied abbeys with associated earthworks including Tupholme Abbey.

5.5.18 There are a number of ancient semi-natural and ancient replanted woodlands, the most notable of which are the scattered Lincolnshire Limewoods that include Chamber's Farm Wood, New Park Wood and Horsington Wood. These woodlands are nationally recognised as some of only a very few small-leaved lime woodlands remaining in Britain and have been collectively designated as a National Nature Reserve. Several other local nature reserves protect threathened areas of traditional meadow. These include Sotby Meadows, Hatton Meadow and Little Scrubs Meadow.

G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland

5.5.19 Many heritage features including archaeological earthworks, medieval ruins, and a battlefield.

5.5.20 Complex surface geoloy and landform patterns are found in this area. The geology can be described as a system of Jurassic and Cretaceous strata which are exposed along some valley sides.

5.5.21 The rich heritage of this landscape is apparent when travelling through and includes Winceby Battle Field, moated earthworks at Withcall, mud and stud cottages at Old Bolingbroke and the ruins of the Medieval Old Bolingbroke Castle.

Settlement and Landuse

E1 - Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland.

5.5.22 The villages, farmsteads and hamlets are linked by an irregular network of wide winding drove roads and tracks. These are often bordered by wide, flowered verges and enclosed by tall hedgerows. Neat mown verges particularly around settlements are a distinctive feature as they are across the whole of East Lindsey.

5.5.23 The medium to large scale arable fields are predominately used for crops of wheat with some beans, potatoes, oil seed rape and occasional biomass crop of Miscanthus. Large modern grain barns are a found throughout the area. Grazing for horses, sheep and cattle in smaller, less regular sized and shaped fields are found around villages such as Bucknall, Horsington and Minting.

G3 - Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Famland

5.5.24 The settlement pattern throughout this area is generally sparse with small nucleated villages settled into small valleys or on the sides of wider valleys.

5.5.25 The agriculture is predominantly wheat based alongside other brassiacs, sugar beet, potatoes and flax.

5.5.26 Arable famland forms a regualr pattern of medium sized fields. Feild boundaries and commonly hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

Landscape Designations

5.5.27 As shown on **Figure 5: Designations Plan** the study area incorporates a small number of statutory and non-statutory designations. These are summarised below:

5.5.28 To the west of the Site, in the hamlet of Hatton is the grade II listed Church of St Stephen, which dates back to the 13th century.

Figure 8: Flood Risk Map. Scale NTS
Source: Flood Map for Planning: Gov.UK, 2021

5.5.29 To the south east of the site is the grade II listed Sturton Harden Corner Farmhouse, dating back to the early 19th century. A red brick, pantile roof 2 storey dwelling with single storey brick built outbuildings.

5.5.30 To the south west of the site is Bardney Limewoods, an SSSI and National Nature Reserve, and to the north east is the SSSI of Sotby Meadows. These small meadows with the adjoining green lane and large old hedges form a landscape and wildlife feature of special interest, representing a type of countryside that has now almost vanished in Lincolnshire

Topography, Hydrology and Geology

5.5.31 The landform of Great Sturton and the study area is gently undulating, gradually rising towards the east and the edge of the AONB of the Lincolnshire Wolds.

5.5.32 A floodplain is the area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks. There are two different types of flood zone shown on the Flood Map for Planning;

- Flood Zone 3 - (blue) an area that could be affected by flooding if there were no flood defences. This area could be flooded from a river by a flood that has a 1 percent (1 in 100) or greater chance of happening each year.

5.5.33 The area is underlain by Jurassic clay and overlain by glacial till, with some alluvial silts, clays and glacial sands and also gravels in river and stream valleys.

G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland

5.5.34 The landscape pattern in this area is very variable reflecting the complex geology. Some parts are gently rolling, some are flat and elevated and others descend steeply.

Vegetation Cover

5.5.35 There are mainly mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees, with wide, flowered verges, Neatly mown particularly around settlements.

5.5.36 There are a number of woodland strips and areas of ancient semi natural and ancient replanted woodlands.

Access and Rights Way

5.5.37 The A158 linking east and west Lincolnshire lies to the south of the Site, and the A153 running along the River Basin corridor lies to the east of the Site.

5.5.38 The local roads around the site are generally single track with passing places.

5.5.39 There is a good network of public rights of way in the southern portion of the character area with two PRoW running throught the Site itself. Refer to **Figure 9 and 10 - Visual Analysis and locations.**

Site Location and Characteristics

5.5.40 The Site extends north of Sturton Road, a single track lane that joins the hamlets of Great Sturton and Hatton. Along its northern edge it abutts Sotby Wood.

5.5.41 The Site consists of 4 large fields of arable farmland. The boundaries are typically mature hedgerow and are well vegetated, screening the majority of views in and out of the Site. The northern boundary is entirely screened by Sotby Woods.

5.5.42 The proposals include for a small area of land to the south west of the Site to be developed for an ancillary sub station building, adjacent to an existing sub station. The Site, generally 'L' shape, is approx 79ha.

5.5.43 Refer to **Figure 2 - Site View Location Plan** and **Figure 3 - Site Photographs**.

Context

5.5.44 There are three entrances into the fields along Sturton Road, these are via breaks in the boundary hedgerows to allow for agricultural vehicular access.

5.5.45 There are two dwellings located opposite the southern boundary, and furhter along just past the western edge of the site there are a further five detached dwellings in close proximity.

5.5.46 There is one PRoW Sotb/789/1 that runs through the northern Site boundary joining , Romand Road on the northern side to Sturton Road on the southern side. Further to the west of the Site is PRoW Hatt/103/1 that joins the centre of the hamlet of Hatton with Sturton Road at Park Farm.

Topography and Hydrology

5.5.47 The Site is gently undulating, at the northern boundary it is 45m AOD, dipping to 39m AOD in the middle of the eastern edge, and then rises again to 45m AOD as the Site abutts Sturton Road.

5.5.48 The Proposed Development will not require any major regrading of the existing land form in order to facilitate the proposed development.

5.5.49 The Flood Map for Planning Service provides accurate mapping of the floodplain area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks. It illustrates the extent of the natural floodplain if there were no flood defences or certain other man-made structures and channel improvements. The northern boundary of the Site as it abutts Sotby Wood is situated within Flood Zone 3, an area benefiting from flood defences. This can be seen in **Figure 8**.

Land Use, Land Cover and Vegetation

5.5.50 The Site consists of two arable fields, totalling approx 79ha. The fields are well kept with mature hedgerow boundaries which in parts screen the views into the fields from Sturton Road. Where the vegetation is less mature, there are wide open views across the fields towards Sotby Wood.

Landscape Receptors

5.5.51 Based on the above assessment of landscape and settlement character, a number of landscape receptors have been identified. Within the study area, the following landscape elements and characteristic landscape components (in no particular order) that may be effected by the proposed development are:

- The Site including:
  - Topography;
  - Land use;
  - On Site Vegetation;
  - The overall Character of the Site;

Designations:

- There are no designations associated with the Site, although the Site does sit within 7km west of the Linclonshire Wolds AONB.

Landscape Character:

- The character of E1 Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland.
- The character of G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland.

5.5.52 An assessment of their sensitivity are described in **Table 2.** The table should be read in conjunction with **Tables B1 and B3** in **Appendix B** setting out the criteria used to determine sensitivity to change.

5.5.53 The wider LCTs are considered not to be affected by the proposed development due to intervening vegetation, topography and/or the built environment.

5.6 Landscape Effects

5.6.1 The assessment of landscape effects during construction and after completion (Year 1 and Year 15) on the landscape resource identified in the baseline study is set out in **Table 2** and are described below.

5.6.2 The tables should be read in conjunction with the criteria for determining the magnitude of change in **Appendix C: Table C1**, the matrix of scale of importance in **Appendix C: Table C3** and the methodology described in **Section 2.0** of this report.

Construction and Temporary Effects

5.6.3 During the construction phase direct adverse effects to landscape components will result from changes in land cover and alterations to the existing topography, for example through excavation for installation of the solar panels, access and services. This will occur alongside the provision of temporary infrastructure such as access, the storage of materials; the use of operational plant; and general construction works. All are uncharacteristic features of the landscape, but will generally be temporary and short-term. All construction works will be carried out in full accordance with best practice to avoid, reduce or limit the extent of effects as far as possible.

5.6.4 Across the Site there will be a temporary disturbance of the existing ground levels arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The scale of the effect on the topography of the site during construction will be temporary **Negligible.**

5.6.5 The proposed development will result in a semi - permanent change in land use. The existing green field land, will be replaced with a temporary construction site. There will be a localised extent of change to land use within the Site boundary which slightly alters the character or nature of the wider landscape. This change will result in a **Minor Adverse** scale of effect at the site level.

5.6.6 Existing vegetation along the boundaries of the Site is to be retained where possible and protected during construction, resulting in a **Negligible** scale of effect during construction.

5.6.7 The overall character of the Site will temporarily change from a green field site to a construction site. Uncharacteristic components will be introduced alongside characteristic features or elements. There will be a noticeable, temporary and localised **Moderate Adverse** scale of effect on the character of the Site and its immediately surrounding area.

5.6.8 All construction works will be carried out in full accordance with best practice to reduce adverse landscape effects. Construction activity will introduce uncharacteristic elements to the landscape. However these will be short term in nature, as such the Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland LCA, of which the Application Site forms a small part, will experience a **Negligible** effect during the construction phase.

5.6.9 There will be no effect from construction on the neighbouring Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland LCA.

Permanent Development and Effects at Year 1 / Year 15

5.6.10 The Proposed Development has been designed to minimise its effects and to integrate the site into the wider landscape to include the retention and enhancement of the existing landscape structure.

5.6.11 There will be a permanent change to the topography of the Site however this will not alter once the development has been completed resulting in a permanent scale of effect of **Negligible** at Year 1 with no further change.

5.6.12 The Proposed Development would result in a semi - permanent change in land use. There will be a permanent **Minor Adverse** effect at Year 1, reducing to a **Negligible** scale of effect on land use at the site level.

5.6.13 The retained boundary vegetation will provide a mature landscape setting to the proposed development. The effect of new planting will initially be limited. As this planting matures, improving both landscape and ecological diversity the scale of effect will be **Negligible** by Year 15.

5.6.14 The area of the Site identified as developable will semi -permanently change from green field land to a solar PV park. The design and layout of the proposed development considers the character of the surrounding landscape. Retained vegetation to the site boundaries, new hedgerow planting and gapping up will incorporate locally appropriate native species. The effect on the character of the Site will initially be **Moderate Adverse** decreasing to **Minor Adverse** over time as vegetation matures and the proposals settle into the surrounding landscape.

5.6.15 The proposed development of land identified as developable will be relatively contained by existing well vegetated boundaries and undulating topography, with its visibility further decreasing over time as the proposed landscape mitigation measures and new hedgerow matures. The overall scale of effect on the wider Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland LCA, of which the Application Site forms a small part, will be **Negligible** in Year 1 with no further change.

5.6.16 There will be no effect from the proposed development on the neighbouring Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland LCA.

5.6.17 The development proposals will fit well with the landform, scale and pattern of the local landscape and retain key characteristics such as existing vegetated boundaries. In landscape terms the overall scale of effect on the setting of the settlement of Great Sturton and rural surrounds will be **Negligible**.

Table 2: Landscape Receptors and Sensitivity

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Description	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Change size/scale: extent:	Scale of Effect
Site features							
Topography	Medium	Low	The Site is gently undulating, at the northern boundary it is 45m AOD, dipping to 39m AOD in the middle of the eastern edge, and then rises again to 45m AOD as the Site abuts Sturton Road. The Proposed Development of solar PV panels will not however require any regrading of the existing land form in order to facilitate its installation.	Low	Construction	Negligible	**Negligible**
					Completion Year 1	Negligible	**Negligible**
					Completion Year 15	Negligible	**Negligible**
Land use	Medium	Low	The Site consists of four arable fields, totalling approx 79ha. The fields are well kept with mature hedgerow boundaries which in parts screen the views into the fields from Sturton Road. Solar PV Panels can allow dual use by grazing sheep and wildflower margins or a whole site of wildflower meadow. At the end of life the panels can be removed with little to no effect.	Low	Construction	Medium Negative	**Minor Adverse**
					Completion Year 1	Medium Negative	**Minor Adverse**
					Completion Year 15	Low Negative	**Negligible**
On-site vegetation	Medium	Low	The Site is bordered on three sides by well kept mature hedgerows, with some occasional mature deciduous trees of varying species along the boundaries. Along Sturton Road there are a few gaps in the hedgerow to allow agricultural vehicular access. The arable fields are large with open views across to the backdrop of Sotby Wood. The proposed development includes for gapping up of old field access points where no longer required, new hedgeorw boundaries to the north east and south west, and allowing the existing hedgerow to grow slightly taller to achieve 1.8m in height to aid screening from localised views.	Low	Construction	Negligible	**Negligible**
					Completion Year 1	Negligible	**Negligible**
					Completion Year 15	Low Positive	**Negligible**
Landscape Character							
Character of the Site	Medium	Medium	The Site, which extends north of Sturton Road, a single track lane, and along its northern edge abuts Sotby Wood. The Site is made up of four large fields of arable farmland. The boundaries are typically mature hedgerow and are well vegetated, screening the majority of views in and out of the Site. The northern boundary is entirely screened by Sotby Woods. The proposals include for a small area of land to the south west of the Site to be developed for an ancillary sub station building, adjacent to an existing sub station. The Site, generally 'L' shape, is approx 79ha.	Medium	Construction	Medium Negative	**Moderate Adverse**
					Completion Year 1	Medium Negative	**Moderate Adverse**
					Completion Year 15	Low Negative	**Minor Adverse**
The character of E1 Wragby to Horsington Woodland and Farmland	Medium	Medium	The fabric of this agricultural landscape is based on a patchwork of fields and woodland interwoven with mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees and scattered rural settlements and farmsteads. Parts of the eastern edge of the area are designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value. The proposals for the Solar PV park will retain all existing vegetation, hedgerows and hedgerow trees. There may be a requirement to remove some vegetation at access points, but these will be replaced. Following decommissioning of the Site it can be returned to its agricultural use with little to no impact on the green infrastructure, retaining the characteristics of the LCA	Medium	Construction	Negligible	**Negligible**
					Completion Year 1	Negligible	**Negligible**
					Completion Year 15	Negligible	**Negligible**
The character of G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland	High	Medium	The landform pattern of this area is very variable reflecting the complex geology. Some parts are gently rolling, some are flat and elevated and others descend steeply. This landscape, characterised by ridges and both wide and narrow valleys, is blanketed by a patchwork of arable and pastoral fields, and scattered with pockets of parkland and woodland. Some of the north eastern parts of the area are within the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to the south west most of the area lies within an Area of Great Landscape Value. The proposed Site is not located within this LCA and cannot be discerned from this LCA and therefore has no impact on this LCA.	High	Construction	None	**None**
					Completion Year 1	None	**None**
					Completion Year 15	None	**None**
The Settlement Character of Great Sturton	Medium	Medium	Great Sturton itself is a very small hamlet with only twelve houses and 40 residents. The local church is dedicated to 'All Saints' and is Grade II Listed, dating back to the 11th century. The roads that run through Great Sturton are generally single track winding lanes, with hedgerows around. The main cluster of dwellings is situated around the Church, with a further scattering of dwellings to the west along Sturton Road. Dwellings are predominantly detached and of a medium to large size. There are a handful of agricultural buildings along Sturton Road, including Grade II Listed Corner Farm, which add to the rural character of the surrounds. The proposals will fit well with the landform, scale and pattern, the dark muted colours of the PV panels echoing the dark and muted colours of the backdrop of Sotby Wood.	Medium	Construction	Negligible	**Negligible**
					Completion Year 1	Negligible	**Negligible**
					Completion Year 15	Negligible	**Negligible**

6. VISUAL ASSESSMENT

6.1 Scope

6.1.1 The following section examines the visibility of the site from the surrounding area. This appraisal is based on a zone of theoretical visibility and aerial images which have then been refined by the field survey.

6.1.2 The zone of theoretical visibility demonstrates the extent of potential visibility to or from a specific area. The approximate visibility of the Site off Sturton Road is demonstrated in **Figure 9** and **Representative Views 1-24**.

6.2 Visual Receptors

6.2.1 The visual receptors and an assessment of their sensitivity are described below. The table should be read in conjunction with **Section 2.0** and **Tables B1 and B4** in **Appendix B** setting out the criteria used to determine sensitivity to change.

6.2.2 Within the visual envelope, visual receptors i.e. those individuals who will see the Site and may experience a change in their view as a result of the proposed development have been identified as follows:

- Users of local roads:
- Users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW):

6.2.3 This includes receptors within the secondary visual envelope where views are predominantly glimpsed or filtered by intervening vegetation and development and as such the proposal is likely to form a minor aspect of the views currently experienced.

6.2.4 GLVIA3 places emphasis on assessing visual effects on public areas and viewpoints, rather than individual private residential properties; however, it is acknowledged that residents may be particularly sensitive to changes in their visual amenity. As part of this assessment the combined effects on a number of different groups of residential properties within the visual envelope have been considered to assess the effect on the community as a whole. When considering views from groups of properties, views from ground floor windows and garden space (which are occupied during waking/daylight hours) are considered to be the most sensitive. It should be noted that in planning terms there is not a private right to a view.

6.3 Representative Views

6.3.1 Within the study area a number of representative and illustrative views of the site have been selected to demonstrate the existing visual amenity and the change likely to be experienced. The viewpoint locations have been chosen based on distance, the degree of visibility, the nature of the view and the anticipated number or type of potential receptors.

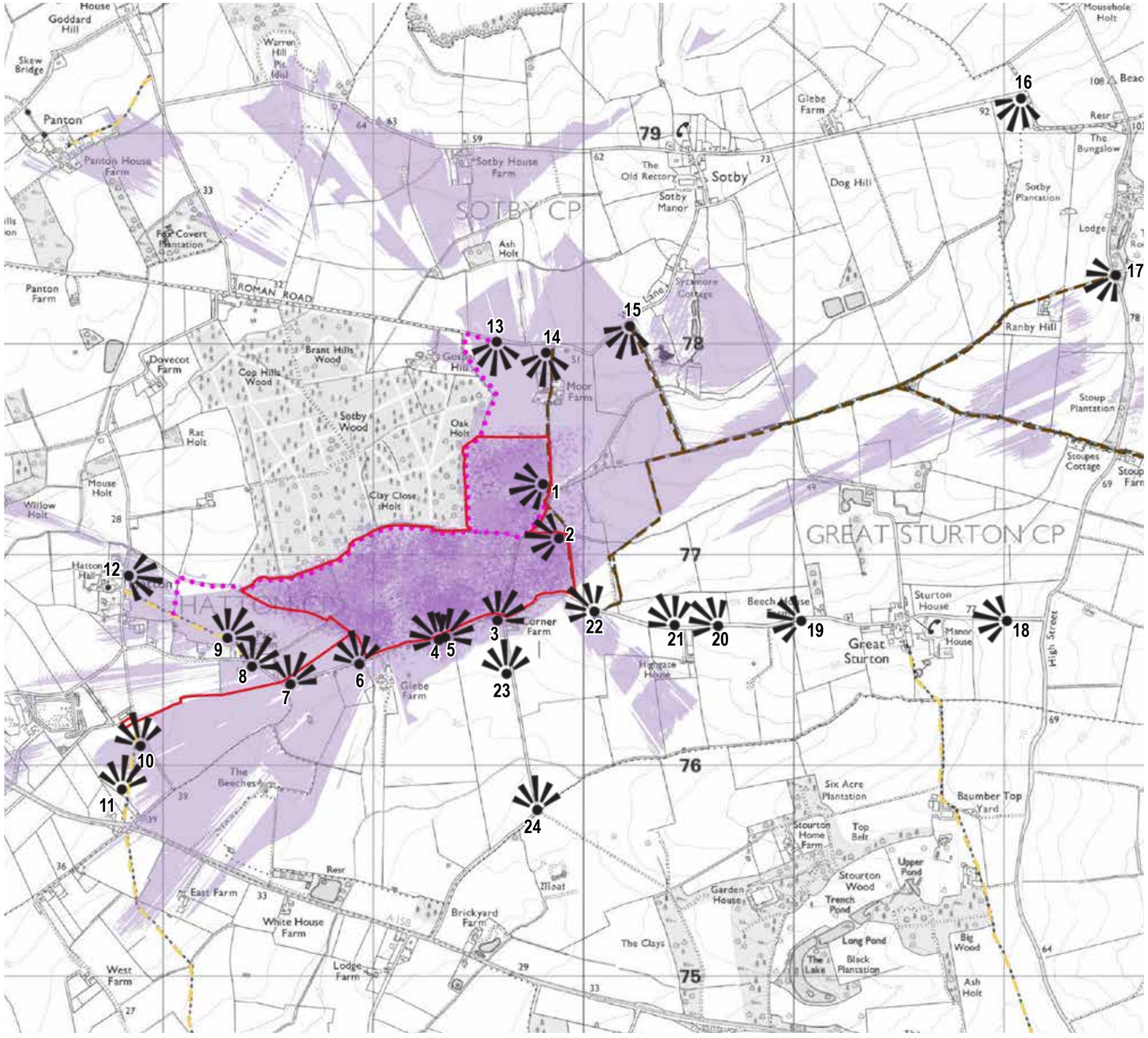
6.3.2 Photographs were taken in December 2021 where vegetation is not in leaf. Winter months would demonstrate a worst case scenario when vegetation was not in leaf. Visibility will be lower in summer when deciduous vegetation is in full leaf.

6.3.3 For each viewpoint the visual receptors are identified and their sensitivity assessed. The effects of the proposed development are then subsequently described and assessed.

6.4 Zone of Theoretical Visibility

6.4.1 The extent of potential visibility of the proposed development has been informed by a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). Whilst the ZTV is able to give a reasonably accurate representation of where views may be possible, it should be noted that landscapes can change between data collections resulting in potential views being screened.

6.4.2 Following the Site visit the ZTV has been refined to omit areas where the Site is not visible beyond layers of intervening vegetation and/or built development.



KEY

- Site Boundary
- Representative Viewpoints
- Primary Visual Envelope
- Secondary Visual Envelope (Glimpsed views)
- PRoW Footpath
- PRoW Bridleway
- Permissive Footpath

Figure 9: Visual Analysis and Locations of Representative Views.

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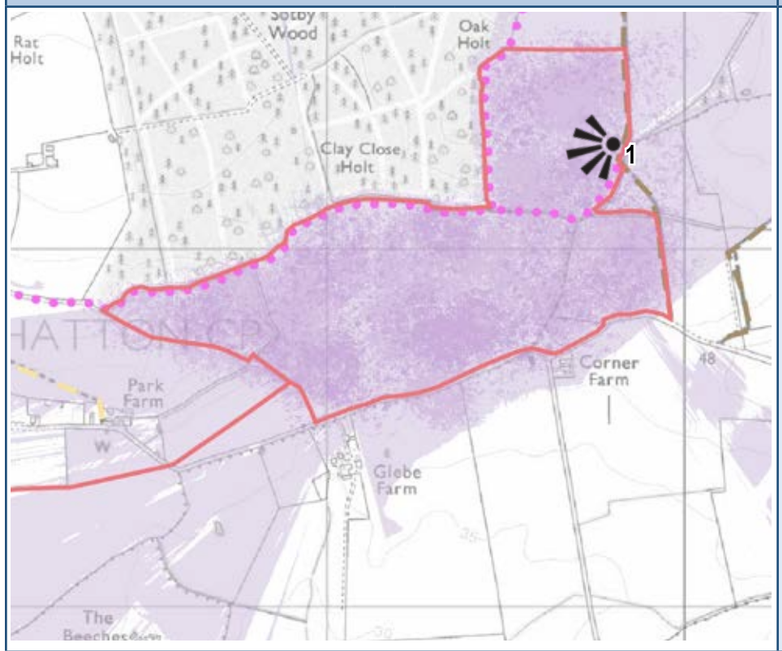
Approximate extent of Site

PRoW Sotb 789/1

VIEWPOINT 1

View from PRoW looking west across Site to Sotby Wood



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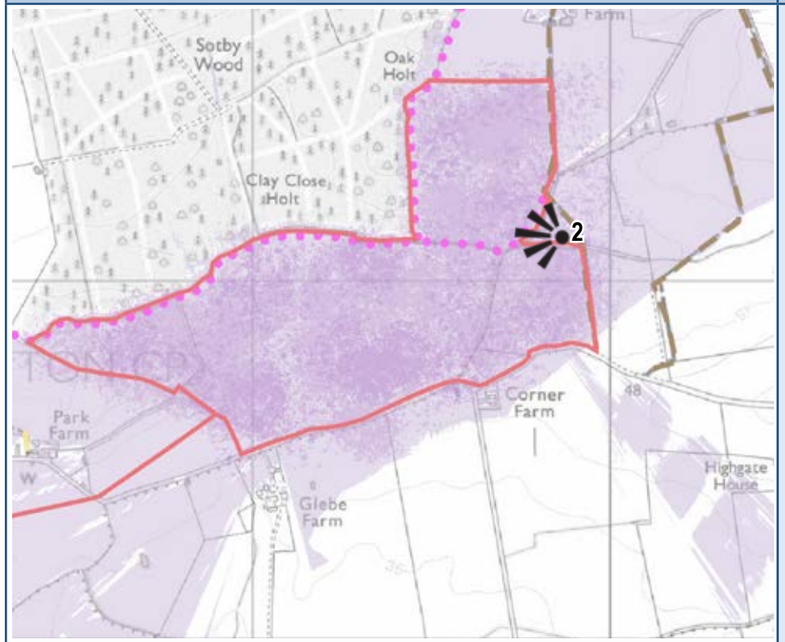
Distance from site: 0m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 40m
OS grid reference: 519839, 377299	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

SENSITIVITY: HIGH

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
Taken from the PRoW Bridleway Sotb 789/1 that forms the north eastern Site boundary, looking west towards Sotby Wood. Looking across arable farmland, this large field fills the majority of the view, with Sotby Wood forming the horizon line and curtailing views. To the right hand side of the view the arable field rises to form the horizon line, whilst to the left hand side of the view runs a small valley, a tributary to the River Witham, before the land rises up to Sturton Road which forms the southern Site boundary. Hedgerow field boundaries tend to be in good condition and often augmented by small wooded copses and tree belts. **Receptors** • Users of PRoW Bridleway Sotb 789/1	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. There will be clear views of construction activities from this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***High Negative***.	The proposal will introduce dissonant elements, altering the composition of the view, whilst the key characteristics will remain such as field boundaries and Sotby Wood forming the horizon. The magnitude of change will remain ***High Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible from this viewpoint, however, not high or solid to block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as the Wood and vegetated field boundaries. The magnitude of change will remain ***High Negative***.
SIGNIFICANCE			
	MAJOR ADVERSE	**MAJOR ADVERSE**	**MAJOR ADVERSE**

VIEWPOINT 2

View from PRoW looking west across Site.



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Distance from site: 19m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 40m
OS grid reference: 519923, 377103	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

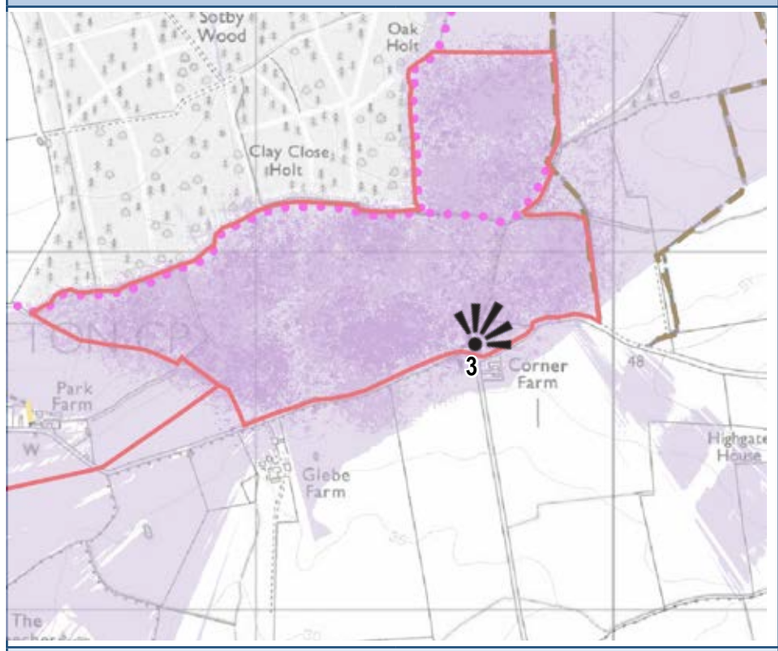
SENSITIVITY: HIGH

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
Taken from the PRoW Bridleway GtSt 789/1 that forms the eastern Site boundary, looking west across the Site, with Sotby Wood to the north west. Looking across arable farmland and some wildflower rough grass field margins for wild birds, access gaps within the hedgerow field boundaries allow views into the Site. The horizon line is formed by linear tree belts and hedgerows and trees along with Sotby Wood to the north west, curtailing views. To the right hand side of the view the PRoW Bridleway continues and curves around to the north eastern field (see Viewpoint 1), whilst to the left hand side of the view it continues, rising slightly to meet Sturton Road which forms the southern Site boundary. Hedgerow field boundaries tend to be in good condition and often augmented by small wooded copses and tree belts. **Receptors** • Users of PRoW Bridleway GtSt 789/1	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. There will be clear views of construction activities from this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***Medium Negative***.	The proposal will introduce dissonant elements, altering the composition of the view, whilst the key characteristics will remain such as field boundaries, tree belts and Sotby Wood forming the horizon. Some field access points will be gapped up where no longer required and hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Medium Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible from this viewpoint, however, not high or solid to block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as the Wood and vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will provide further screening and filtering of views. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Low Negative***.
SIGNIFICANCE	**MAJOR ADVERSE**	**MAJOR ADVERSE**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 3

View north from junction of Sturton Road and Sturton Lane at Corner Farm



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Distance from site: 35m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 46m
OS grid reference: 519611, 376687	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

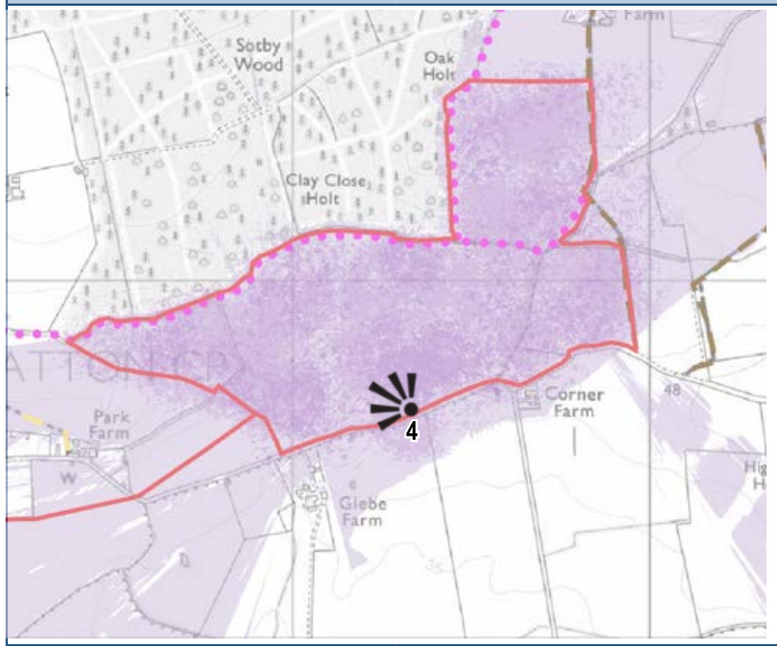
SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	**Completion Year 1**	**Completion Year 15**
This viewpoint at the junctions of the narrow lanes, is on slightly elevated land, with the Site falling away to the north and down to a tributary of the River Witham and Sotby Wood. Corner Farm, Grade II Listed, is situated just to the right hand side of the view. It presents a barn, 2 storeys high to Sturton Road, with the main Listed Farmhouse set behind and thus having little to no views over the proposed Site. From this point, looking northwards, there are views across the undulating landscape, where a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland form a wooded landscape. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views into the Site. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road • Users of Sturton Lane	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. There will be occasional clear views of construction activities through gaps in hedgerow. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is visible through gaps, a slightly uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the well wooded horizon. Some field access points will be gapped up where no longer required and hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible through gaps, however, would not block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as the Wood and vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will provide further screening and filtering of views. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
SIGNIFICANCE	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 4

View north west across the Site towards Sotby Wood



SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

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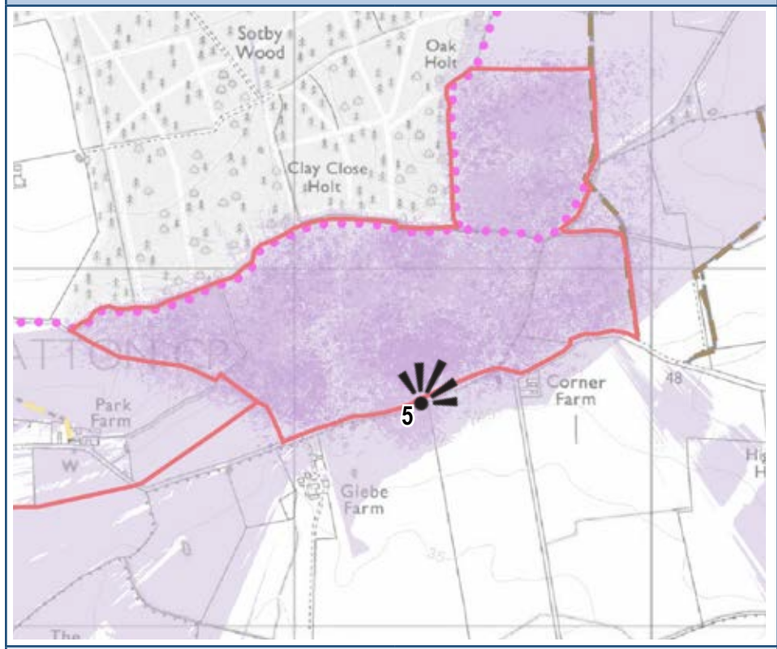
Distance from site: 23m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 45m
OS grid reference: 519362, 376640	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
This viewpoint from Sturton Road, is on slightly elevated land, with the Site falling away to the north and down to a tributary of the River Witham and Sotby Wood. From this point, looking to the north west, there are views into the Site above the hedgerow field boundary, with Sotby Wood forming the northern Site boundary here. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views into the Site. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. There will be occasional clear views of construction activities through gaps and above hedgerow. The magnitude of change will be ***Medium Negative***.	The proposal is visible through gaps, an uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the well wooded horizon. Some field access points will be gapped up where no longer required and hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Medium Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible through gaps and above hedgerows, however, would not block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as Sotby Wood and vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will provide further screening and filtering of views. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Low Negative***.
SIGNIFICANCE	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 5

View north east across the Site towards Sotby Wood



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Distance from site: 23m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 45m
OS grid reference: 519362, 376640	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

Description of View

This viewpoint from Sturton Road, is on slightly elevated land, with the Site falling away to the north and down to a tributary of the River Witham and Sotby Wood.
From this point, looking to the north east, there are views into the Site above the hedgerow field boundary, with Sotby Wood forming the northern Site boundary here. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland form a wooded horizon.
Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views into the Site. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition.

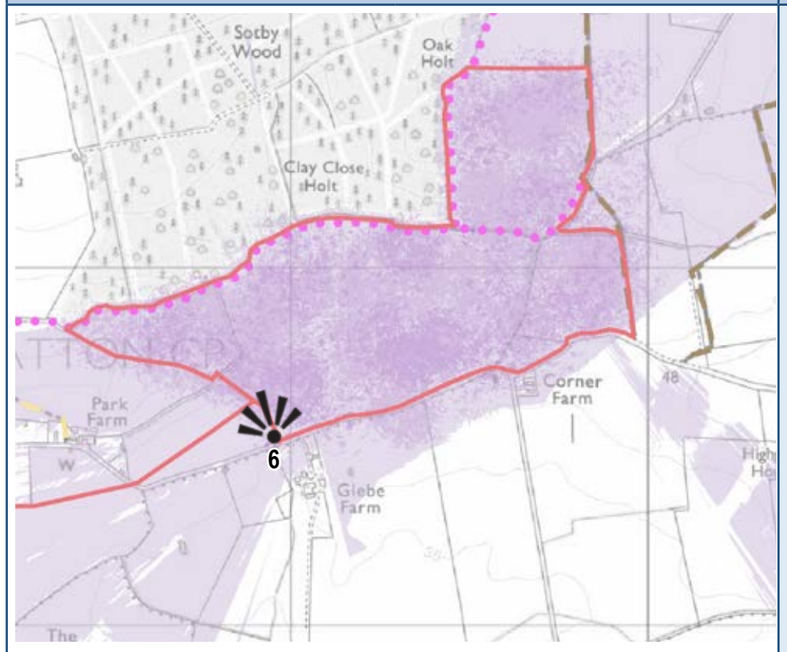
Receptors

- Users of Sturton Road

Magnitude of Change		
Construction	**Completion Year 1**	**Completion Year 15**
In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. There will be occasional clear views of construction activities through gaps and above hedgerow. The magnitude of change will be ***Medium Negative***.	The proposal is visible through gaps, an uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the well wooded horizon. Some field access points will be gapped up where no longer required and hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Medium Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible through gaps and above hedgerows, however, would not block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as Sotby Wood and vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will provide further screening and filtering of views. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Low Negative***.
SIGNIFICANCE		
MODERATE ADVERSE	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**

Approximate extent of Site

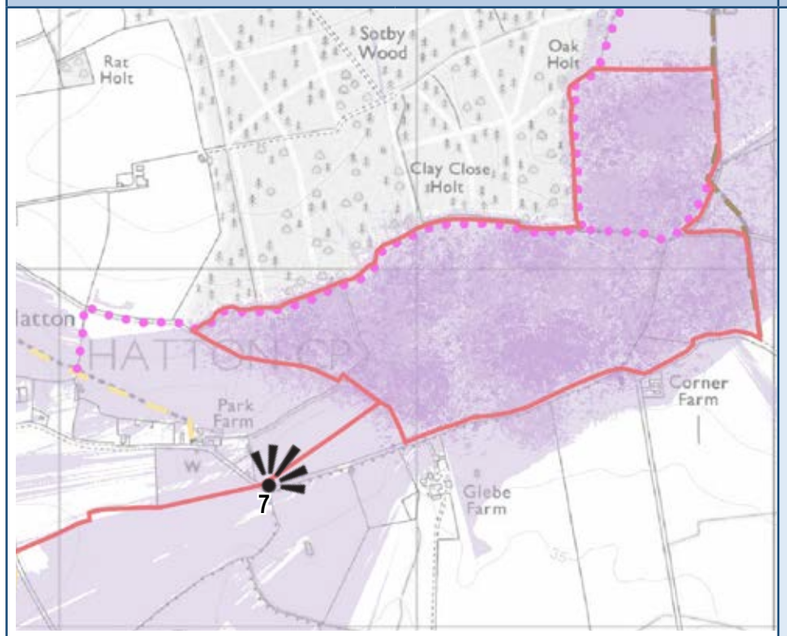
VIEWPOINT 6

View north towards the Site from Sturton Road		Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
			Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
	SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM	From this point, looking to the north west, there are occasional glimpsed views into the Site above and through gaps in the hedgerow field boundary, with Sotby Wood forming the northern Site boundary. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views into the Site. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. There will be occasional clear views of construction activities through gaps in hedgerow. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is visible through gaps, a slightly uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the well wooded horizon. Some field access points will be gapped up where no longer required and hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible through gaps, however, would not block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as the Wood and vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will provide further screening and filtering of views. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
Source: Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. License Number 100022432		**SIGNIFICANCE**			
Distance from site: 20m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 42m		**MINOR ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**
OS grid reference: 519027, 376529					
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021				

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 7

View north east towards the Site from Sturton Road



Source: Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. License Number 100022432

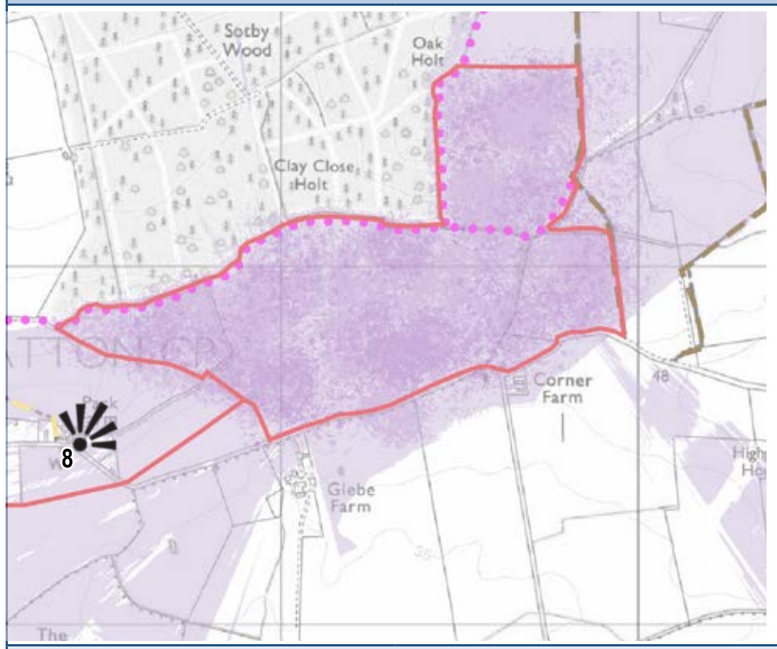
Distance from site: 438m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 38m
OS grid reference: 518578, 376386	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	**Completion Year 1**	**Completion Year 15**
This viewpoint from Sturton Road, clearly illustrates the topography of the Site, with the land falling away to the north and down to a tributary of the River Witham along the boundary with Sotby Wood. From this point, looking to the north east, there are views across the arable fields towards the Site through the access gap in the hedgerow field boundary. Sotby Wood forms the northern Site boundary here. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views into the Site. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint although with clear views across the arable field, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is set back, forming a small uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the well wooded horizon. New hedgerow planting to the south western Site boundary is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible, although set back and diminished by distance, however, would not block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as Sotby Wood and vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will screen development proposals from this view. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
SIGNIFICANCE	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 8

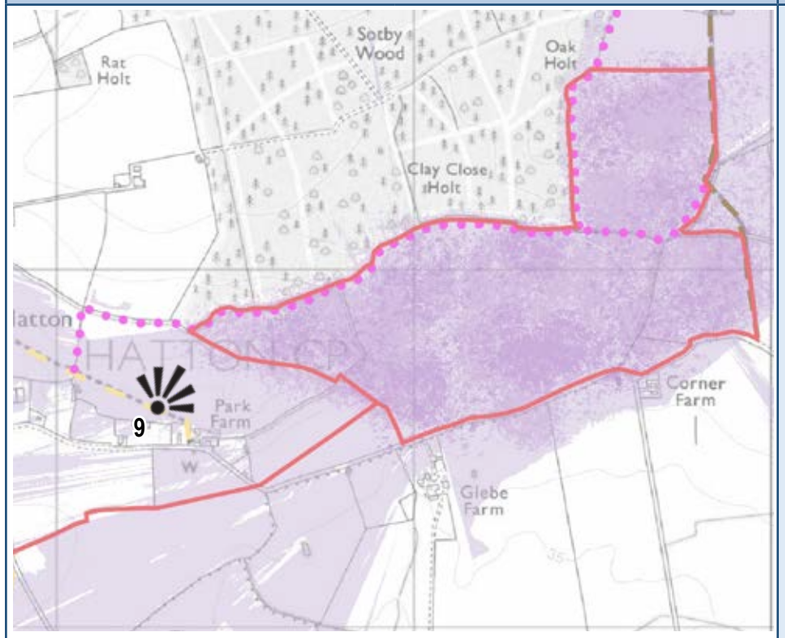
View east towards the Site from Sturton Road		Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
			Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
	SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM	From this point, looking to the east, through horse paddocks, longer views extend across the arable fields towards the Site. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows allow views towards the Site. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Negligible***.	The proposal is set well back, forming a barely discernible part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the well wooded horizon. New hedgerow planting to the south western Site boundary is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Negligible***.	The proposed solar PV park would be barely discernible, set back and diminished by distance. It would not block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as the vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will screen development proposals from this view. The magnitude of change will remain ***Negligible***.
Source: Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. License Number 100022432		**SIGNIFICANCE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**
Distance from site: 372m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 38m				
OS grid reference: 518455, 376455					
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021				

Approximate extent of Site

PRoW Hatt 103/1

VIEWPOINT 9

View north towards the Site from PRoW, with Sotby Wood forming its northern boundary



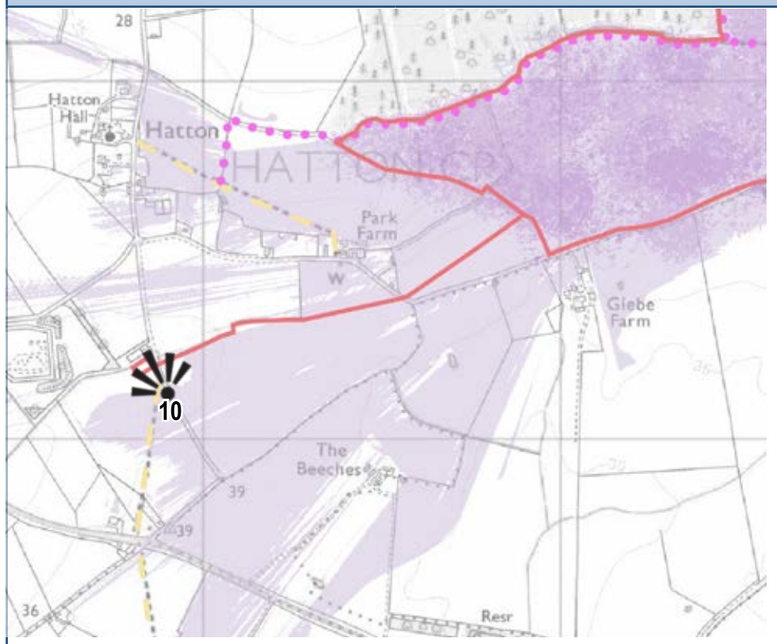
SENSITIVITY: HIGH

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
Taken from the PRoW Hatt 103/1 to the west of the Site boundary, looking towards Sotby Wood that forms the northern Site boundary. This viewpoint clearly illustrates the topography of the Site, with the land falling away to the north and down to a tributary of the River Witham along the boundary with Sotby Wood. There are clear open views across the arable field towards the Site, which is set well back. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland form a wooded horizon. Hedgerow field boundaries tend to be in good condition and often augmented by small wooded copses and tree belts. **Receptors** • Users of PRoW Hatt 103/1	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint although with clear views across the arable field, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is set back, forming a small uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the well wooded horizon. New hedgerow planting to the south western Site boundary is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible, although set back and diminished by distance, however, would not block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as Sotby Wood and vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will screen development proposals from this view. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
SIGNIFICANCE	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**

Distance from site: 238m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 39m
OS grid reference: 518401, 376553	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

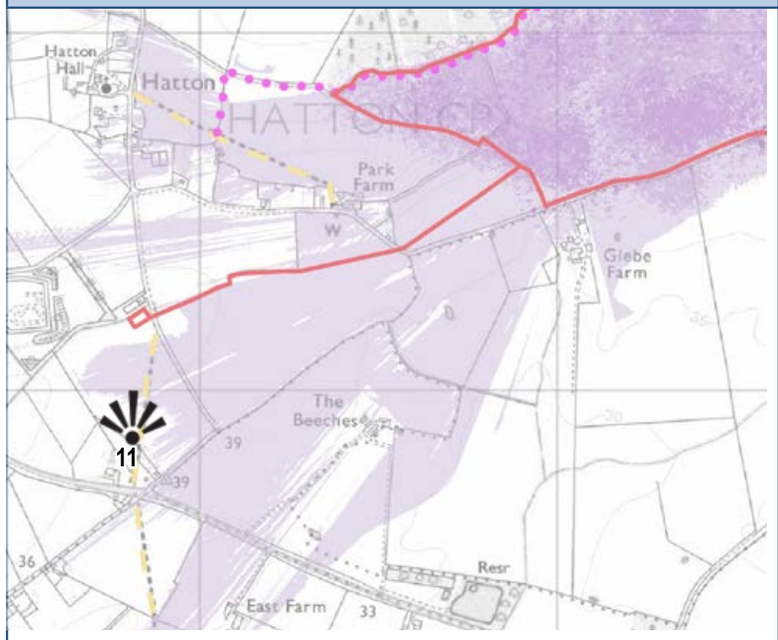
Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 10

View west towards the Site from Panton Road		Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
			Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
	SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM	From this point, looking to the north west, the existing substation of the Hatton Gas Compressor can be seen above the hedgerows. There are occasional glimpsed views into the Site above and through gaps in the hedgerow field boundary, with the existing substation forming the north western Site boundary. Views are generally curtailed by a combination of hedgerows, trees and treebelts, set in an undulating landscape and forming a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views into the Site. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Panton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. There will be clear views of construction activities through gaps and above hedgerow. The magnitude of change will be ***Medium Negative***.	The proposal is visible through gaps, against the existing substation backdrop. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, trees and tree belts. Some field access points will be gapped up where no longer required and hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Medium Negative***.	The proposed solar PV substation would be visible above existing hedgerow and through gaps, however, would not block out key landscape elements of the surroundings such as the vegetated field boundaries. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will provide further screening and filtering of views. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Low Negative***.
Source: Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. License Number 100022432		**SIGNIFICANCE**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**
Distance from site: 65m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 36m				
OS grid reference: 517883, 376155					
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021				

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 11

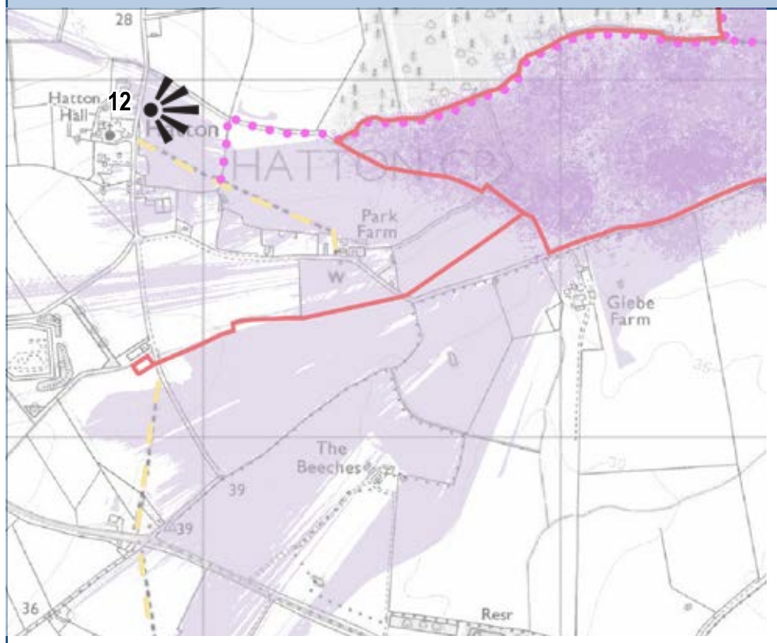
View north towards the Site from PRoW		Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
			Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
	SENSITIVITY: HIGH	From this point on the PRoW Hatt 104/1, looking to the north west, the existing substation of the Hatton Gas Compressor can be seen above the hedgerows. There are clear views over the Site, with the existing substation forming the north western Site boundary. Views are generally curtailed by a combination of hedgerows, trees and treebelts, set in an undulating landscape and forming a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views into the Site. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of PRoW Hatt 104/1	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. There will be clear views of construction activities from this PRoW. The magnitude of change will be ***Medium Negative***.	The proposal is clearly visible, against the existing substation backdrop. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, trees and tree belts. Some field access points will be gapped up where no longer required and hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Medium Negative***.	The proposed solar PV substation would be visible above hedgerow, alongside the existing substation. The key landscape elements of the surroundings such as the vegetated field boundaries and treebelts remain intact. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will provide further screening and filtering of views. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Low Negative***.
Source: Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. License Number 100022432		**SIGNIFICANCE**			
			MAJOR ADVERSE	**MAJOR ADVERSE**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**

Distance from site: 130m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 36m
OS grid reference: 517829, 376034	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 12

View south east towards the Site from Panton Road



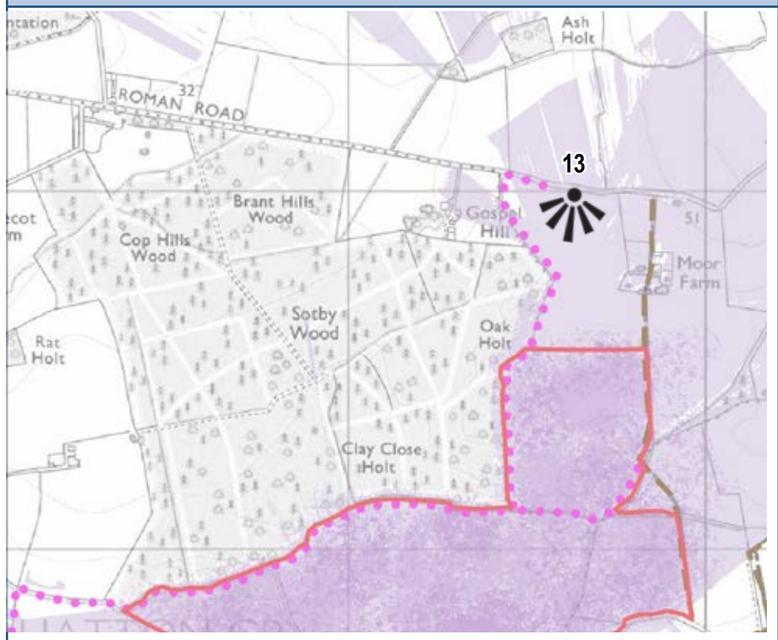
	Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
		Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM	From this point, looking south east, longer views extend across the arable fields towards the Site. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the vegetated boundaries allow views towards the Site, however distance diminishes this view. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Panton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Negligible***.	The proposal is set well back, forming a barely discernible part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the wooded horizon. New hedgerow planting to the south western Site boundary is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Negligible***.	The proposed solar PV park would be barely discernible, set back and diminished by distance. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will screen development proposals from this view. The magnitude of change will remain ***Negligible***.
SIGNIFICANCE		**NEGLIGIBLE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**

Distance from site: 606m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 31m
OS grid reference: 517836, 377022	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.122021

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 13

View south towards the Site from Wass Lane



SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

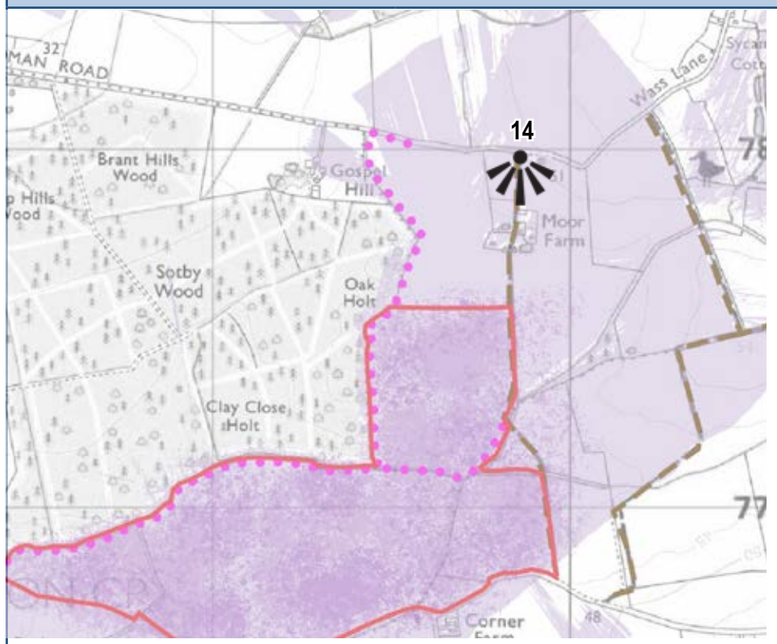
Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
This viewpoint from Wass Lane, illustrates the undulating local topography, whereby the majority of the Site, is situated within the tributary valley and screened from view. From this point, looking to the south east, there are views across the arable fields towards the Site above the hedgerow field boundary. Sotby Wood forms the western Site boundary and curtails views. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Wass Lane	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint although with clear views across the arable field, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance, and the majority of activity screened by being in the tributary valley. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is set back, forming a small uncharacteristic part of the view across the brow of the hill. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands. New hedgerow planting to the north eastern Site boundary is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park is set back and diminished by distance, and screened by hedgerow boundary. Over time, strategic landscape mitigation will screen development proposals from this view. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
SIGNIFICANCE			
	MINOR ADVERSE	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**

Distance from site: 462m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 45m
OS grid reference: 519638, 378006	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 14

View south west towards the Site from Wass Lane



Distance from site: 482m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 50m
OS grid reference: 519848,377998	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

SENSITIVITY: LOW

Description of View

This viewpoint from Wass Lane, where the PRoW Bridleway and track to Moor Farm and Greenacres leads southwards, illustrates the wooded nature of the landscape, whereby the majority of the Site, is situated within the tributary valley and screened from view.

From this point, looking to the south west, there are glimpsed views through existing hedgerow to the arable field beyond. Sotby Wood forms the western Site boundary and curtails views. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon.

Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition.

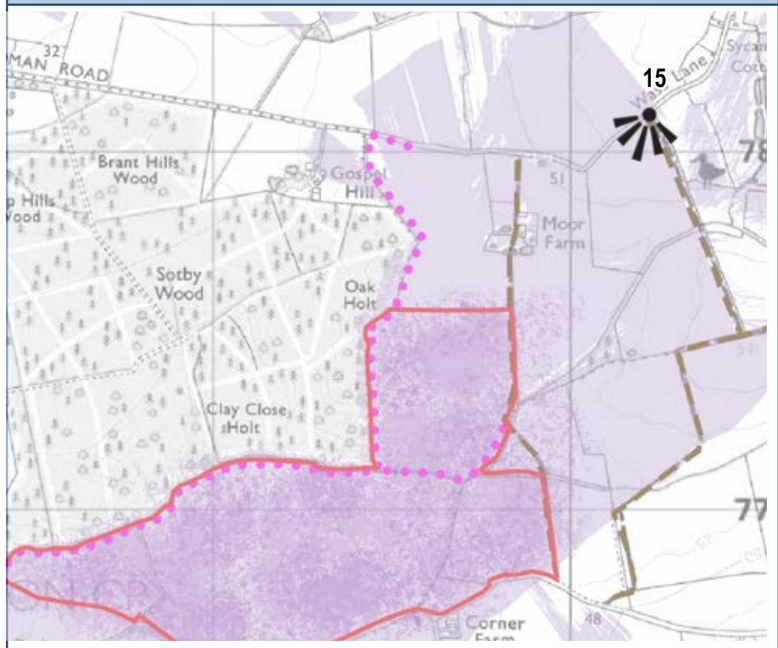
Receptors

- Users of Wass Lane

Magnitude of Change		
Construction	**Completion Year 1**	**Completion Year 15**
The Site is not visible in this viewpoint.	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint.	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint.
The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The magnitude of change will be ***None***
SIGNIFICANCE		
NONE	**NONE**	**NONE**

Approximate extent of Site

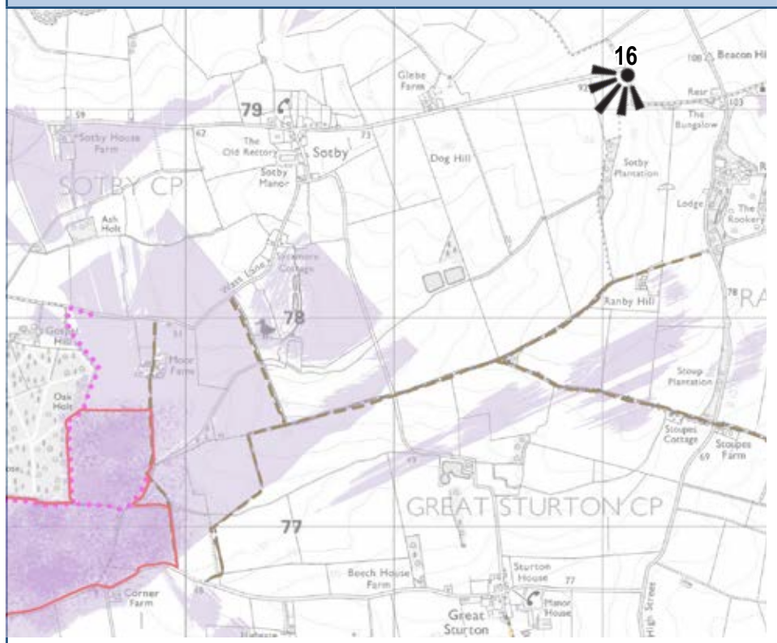
VIEWPOINT 15

View south west towards the Site from Moor Lane		Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
			Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
	SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM	This viewpoint from Moor Lane, where a PRoW Bridleway and track leads southwards, illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby much of the Site, is situated within the tributary valley and screened from view. From this point, looking to the south west, there are views through existing hedgerow gaps to the green arable field alongside Sturton Road and forms part of the Site. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Moor Lane	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint although with clear views across the arable field, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is set back, forming a small uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain such as hedgerow field boundaries, tree belts and woodlands, contributing to the well wooded horizon. New hedgerow planting to the Site boundaries is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible, although diminished by distance, however, the dark muted and matte colours would help it to blend in with the dark muted colours of the wooded landscape it sits within. The proposal will be perceived as a background component and would be barely discernible. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
Source: Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. License Number 100022432		SIGNIFICANCE			
			MINOR ADVERSE	MINOR ADVERSE	NEGLIGIBLE

Distance from site: 687m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 61m
OS grid reference: 520215, 378111	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

VIEWPOINT 16

View south west towards the Site from junction of Main Road where it splits to continue eastwards to High Street B1225



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Distance from site: 2,810m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 98m
OS grid reference: 522110, 379203	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

Description of View

This viewpoint from the junction at Main Road, at the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, looking westwards towards the Site.
This view illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby the Site, is screened from view.
Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition.

Receptors

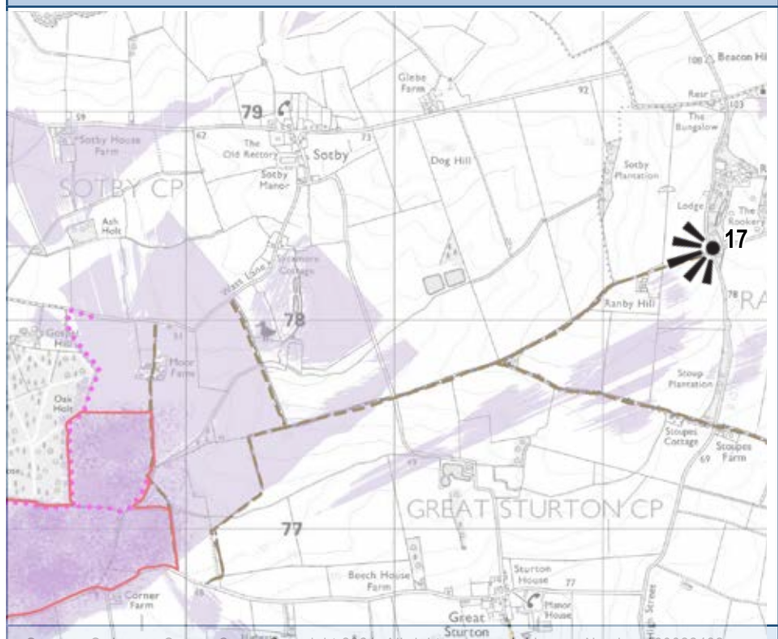
- Users of Main Road

Magnitude of Change

Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
The Site is not visible in this viewpoint.	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint.	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint.
The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The magnitude of change will be ***None***
SIGNIFICANCE		
NONE	**NONE**	**NONE**

VIEWPOINT 17

View west towards the Site from Top Lane



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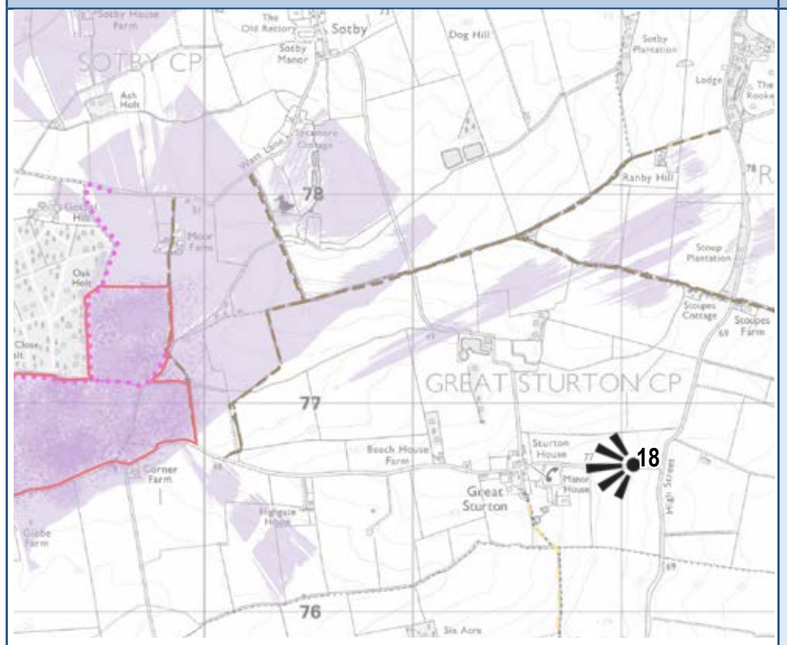
Distance from site: 2,914m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 88m
OS grid reference: 522609, 378378	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
This viewpoint, taken from Top Lane towards the B1225, at the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, looking westwards towards the Site. The ridge line of Ranby Hill, beyond the B1225, screens all views beyond. This view illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby the Site, is screened from view. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Top Lane	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***
SIGNIFICANCE			
	NONE	**NONE**	**NONE**

VIEWPOINT 18

View north west towards the Site from Buttergate Hill



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Distance from site: 2,010m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 77m
OS grid reference: 521946, 376707	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

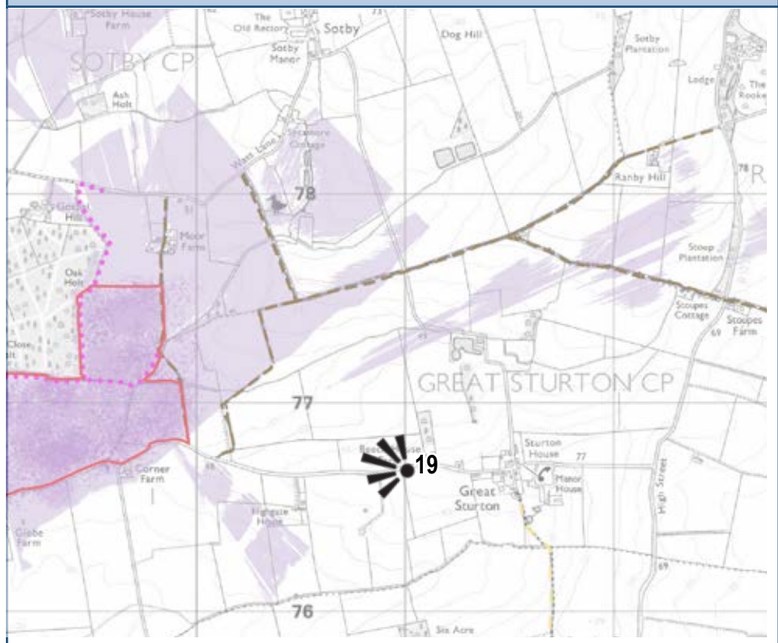
SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
This viewpoint from Buttergate Hill, just east of the hamlet of Great Sturton, looking north westwards towards the Site. This view illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby the Site, is screened from view. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Buttergate Hill	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***
SIGNIFICANCE	**NONE**	**NONE**	**NONE**

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 19

View north west towards the Site from Sturton Road



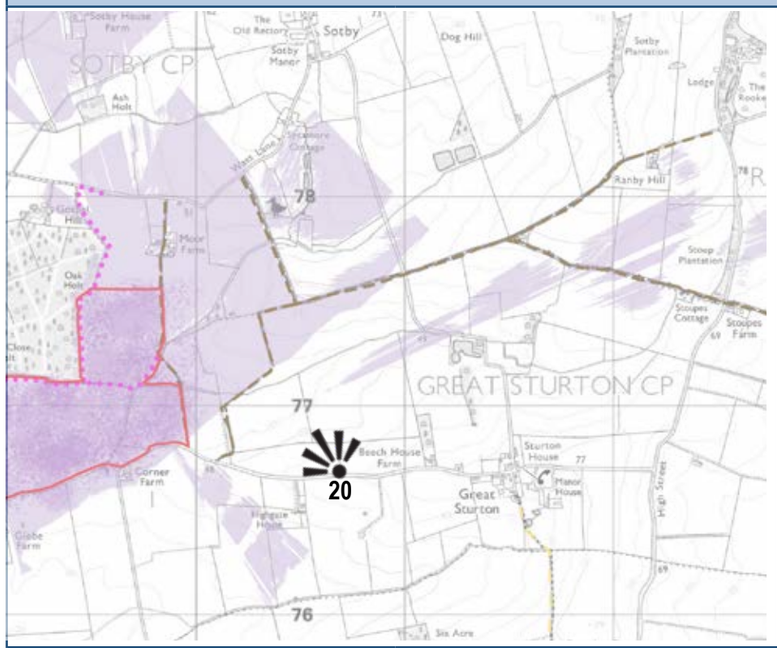
	Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
		Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM	This viewpoint from Sturton Road, illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby much of the Site, situated within the tributary valley, is screened from view. From this point, looking to the north west, there are views above existing hedgerows to the brown arable field alongside Sotby Wood, which forms part of the Site. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is set back, forming a small uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain intact. New hedgerow planting to the Site boundaries is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible, although diminished by distance, however, the dark muted and matte colours would help it to blend in with the dark muted colours of the wooded landscape it sits within. The proposal will be perceived as a background component and would be barely discernible. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
	SIGNIFICANCE	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**

Distance from site: 1,072m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 66m
OS grid reference: 520983, 376702	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 20

View north west towards the Site from Sturton Road



SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

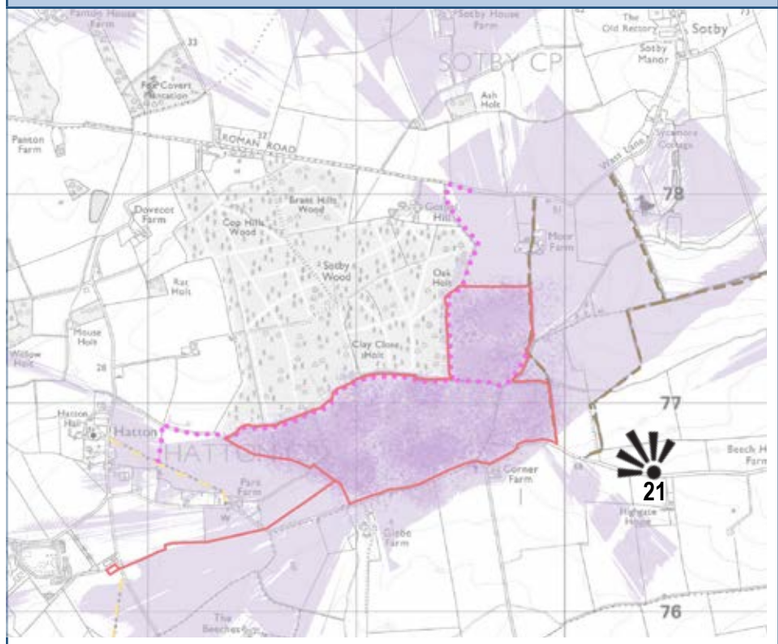
Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
This viewpoint from Sturton Road, illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby much of the Site, situated within the tributary valley, is screened from view. From this point, looking to the north west, there are views above existing hedgerows to the brown arable field alongside Sotby Wood, which forms part of the Site. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is set back, forming a small uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain intact. New hedgerow planting to the Site boundaries is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible, although diminished by distance, however, the dark muted and matte colours would help it to blend in with the dark muted colours of the wooded landscape it sits within. The proposal will be perceived as a background component and would be barely discernible. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
SIGNIFICANCE	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**

Distance from site: 779m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 59m
OS grid reference: 520692, 376670	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 21

View north west towards the Site from Sturton Road



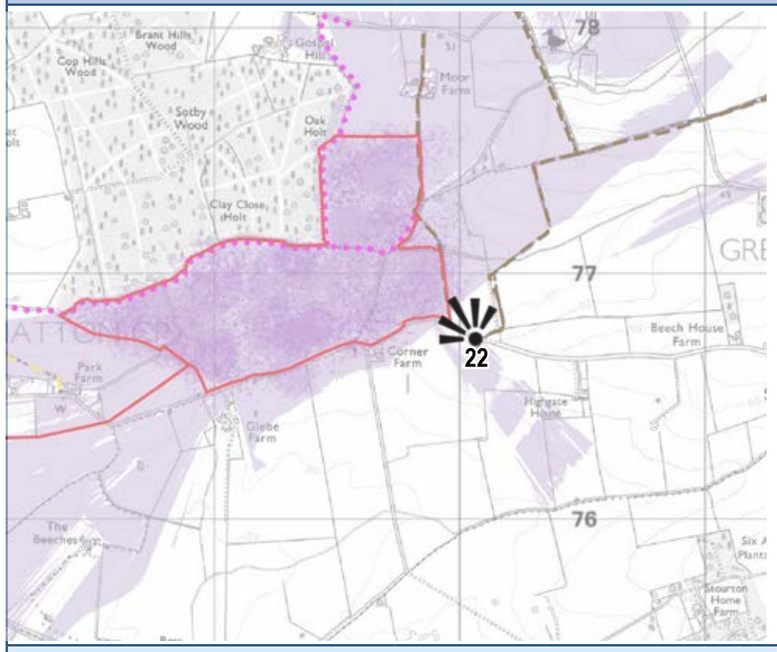
	Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
		Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM	This viewpoint from Sturton Road, illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby much of the Site, situated within the tributary valley, is screened from view. From this point, looking to the north west, there are views above existing hedgerows to the brown arable field alongside Sotby Wood, which forms part of the Site. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set well back from this viewpoint, views of construction activities will be diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is set back, forming a small uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain intact. New hedgerow planting to the Site boundaries is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible, although diminished by distance, however, the dark muted and matte colours would help it to blend in with the dark muted colours of the wooded landscape it sits within. The proposal will be perceived as a background component and would be barely discernible. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
	SIGNIFICANCE	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**

Distance from site: 572m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 57m
OS grid reference: 520481, 376660	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

Approximate extent of Site

VIEWPOINT 22

View north west towards the Site from Sturton Road



Source: Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. License Number 100022432

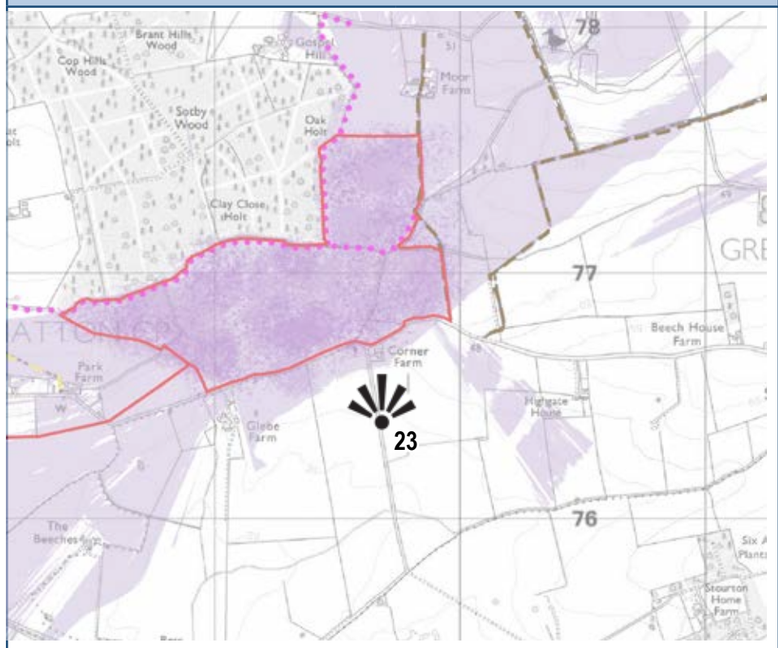
Distance from site: 178m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 48m
OS grid reference: 520078, 376739	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	**Completion Year 1**	**Completion Year 15**
This viewpoint from Sturton Road, illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby much of the Site, situated within the tributary valley, is screened from view. From this point, looking to the north west, there are views through existing hedgerow gaps to the green arable field alongside Sturton Road and the brown arable field alongside Sotby Wood, both of which form part of the Site. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Road	In the short term, there will be disturbance arising from installation of solar PV panels, cables and associated infrastructure services and security fencing. The Site is set back from this viewpoint, however clear views of construction activities will be afforded, although diminished by distance. The magnitude of change will be ***Low Negative***.	The proposal is set back, forming an uncharacteristic part of the view. The key landscape characteristics remain intact. New hedgerow planting to the Site boundaries is proposed and existing hedges allowed to grow taller. Initially new landscape mitigation planting will provide minimal screening. The magnitude of change will remain ***Low Negative***.	The proposed solar PV park would be visible, although diminished by distance, however, the dark muted and matte colours would help it to blend in with the dark muted colours of the wooded landscape it sits within. The proposal will be perceived as a background component and would be barely discernible. The magnitude of change will decrease to ***Negligible***.
SIGNIFICANCE	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	**NEGLIGIBLE**

VIEWPOINT 23

View north towards the Site from Sturton Lane

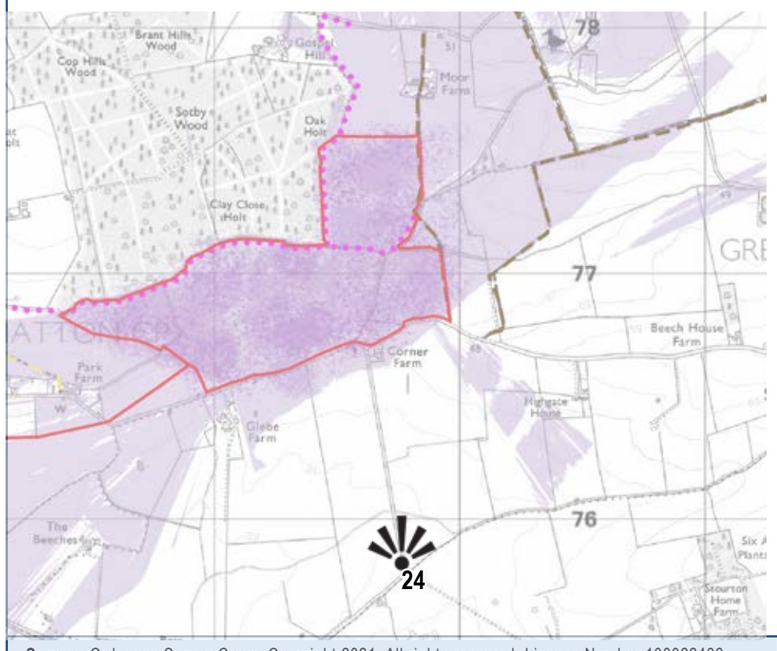


SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM

Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
	Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
This viewpoint from Sturton Lane, illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby the Site, situated within the tributary valley, is screened from view. From this point, looking to the north west, there are views above existing hedgerows to arable fields that rise to a local ridge line and Sturton Road. Corner Farm can be seen at the end of the Lane. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Lane	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***
SIGNIFICANCE			
	NONE	**NONE**	**NONE**

Distance from site: 359m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 39m
OS grid reference: 519667, 376377	
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021

VIEWPOINT 24

View north west towards the Site from Sturton Lane		Description of View	Magnitude of Change		
			Construction	Completion Year 1	Completion Year 15
	SENSITIVITY: MEDIUM	This viewpoint from Sturton Lane, illustrates the undulating wooded nature of the landscape, whereby the Site, situated within the tributary valley, is screened from view. From this point, looking to the north west, there are views above existing hedgerows to arable fields that rise to a local ridge line and Sturton Road. Corner Farm can be seen at the end of the Lane. Across the undulating landscape, a combination of hedgerows, trees, treebelts and woodland merge to form a wooded horizon. Roads are typically narrow single track lanes with very low levels of traffic. Occasional gaps in the hedgerows, field access points, allow views beyond. Hedgerows are otherwise in good condition. **Receptors** • Users of Sturton Lane	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***	The Site is not visible in this viewpoint. The magnitude of change will be ***None***
Source: Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. License Number 100022432		**SIGNIFICANCE**	**NONE**	**NONE**	**NONE**
Distance from site: 955m	**Viewpoint height (AOD):** 37m				
OS grid reference: 519779, 375793					
Camera make + model: NIKON D3100	**Date of photograph:** 15.12.2021				

6.5 Visual Effects

6.5.1 Initially a broad study area extending to 3km and beyond from the Site boundary was adopted as a desk study to understand the relationship of the Site with its wider surroundings. Following the assessment in the field, views are classified as either:

- Near Distance 0 - 0.5km
- Middle Distance Views 0.5 - 1km
- Long Distance Views 1.0km +

6.5.2 The Site, although large, is primarily set along a tributary valley and is enclosed to the north and west by Sotby Wood, a large mature woodland with Pines and oaks forming a dense vegetative boundary. The remaining boundaries are defined by well maintained hedgerows and treebelts. These layers of existing vegetation are dense and mature enough to provide a good level of filtering and screening during winter months. The undulating topography further reduces the visibility of the Site.

6.5.3 Due to the gently undulating topography, and layers of existing vegetation, the Site is screened in the majority of views.

6.5.4 The 24 viewpoints appraise the site and surroundings and the potential effects of the proposed solar PV park. Seven views experience adverse effects, one determined as experiencing Major Adverse effects and two determined as experiencing Moderate Adverse effects, however they are all taken from the near distance. The views identified as experiencing significant effects, Moderate or above, are highlighted in the adjacent table.

6.5.5 Of the seventeen remaining viewpoints, eleven would experience Negligible effects, with six experiencing no change in view following development of the proposals.

6.5.6 The Zone of Theoretical Visibility, or Influence (ZTV), the area from within which the proposed development may have an effect, is relatively contained and does not extend across middle or long distances. Located within a gently undulating landscape with well vegetated boundaries, views are restricted to near distances in the majority.

Table 3 - Summary of Visual Effects

Viewpoint	Distance of View	Significance of Effect Post Completion 15 Years
1	Near	Major Adverse
2	Near	Moderate Adverse
3	Near	Negligible
4	Near	Minor Adverse
5	Near	Minor Adverse
6	Near	Negligible
7	Near	Negligible
8	Near	Negligible
9	Near	Minor Adverse
10	Near	Minor Adverse
11	Near	Moderate Adverse
12	Middle	Negligible
13	Near	Negligible
14	Near	None
15	Middle	Negligible
16	Long	None
17	Long	None
18	Long	None
19	Long	Negligible
20	Middle	Negligible
21	Middle	Negligible
22	Near	Negligible
23	Near	None
24	Middle	None

6.6 Visual Evaluation

6.6.1 The proposed solar PV park development, set within a tributary valley and amongst the existing, retained, hedgerow field boundaries, is substantially screened in all views, with only near distance views afforded from the Site boundaries, especially where these are PRoWs. The PV panels dark and muted colours will aid blending into the dark and muted colours of the well wooded surrounds. The majority of views are screened or are areas where if perceived, the panels form a small component of the wider view, and therefore might be missed by a casual observer. Of the two viewpoints from the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, none experience any change in view.

6.6.2 In this way the wider setting, and establishment of a solar PV park has been well considered and the key landscape and visual characteristics remain intact. Overall, the influence of the development proposals on the surrounding landscape is not considered to be harmful.

7. MITIGATION AND MONITORING MEASURES

7.1 Primary Mitigation and Design Measures

7.1.1 The proposed solar PV park on Lnad of Sturton Road, Great Sturton, has been carefully designed to minimise landscape and visual effects. Primary mitigation or those aspects integrated into the development masterplan and detailed design are described in Section 3 of this report.

7.1.2 These are inherent parts of the design included in the project description and are considered in the assessment of landscape and visual effects.

7.2 Secondary Mitigation and Monitoring Measures

7.2.1 The following section identifies and describes secondary mitigation and monitoring measures to minimise the probability of landscape and visual effects occurring, and ensure the successful completion of the scheme.

7.2.2 Such measures are identified at the key stages of the project post planning namely detailed design (including discharge of planning conditions); demolition and construction; implementation and monitoring; and long-term management.

Detailed Design

7.2.3 As highlighted a number of aspects of the proposed development will form part of the detailed design. The key issues relating to secondary mitigation are set out below:

- Proposed services: The detailed design of proposed services should be fully coordinated with the landscape scheme;
- Hard landscape: The arrangement and specification of hard surfacing, enclosures / fencing, and other structures. The proposals should be in accordance with the submitted Landscape Masterplan;
- Tree retention and protection: A final Arboricultural Method Statement, Tree Protection Plan and Schedule of Tree Works must be prepared to ensure the retention of important existing vegetation as identified in this report. The details shall be in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment and should include full consideration of proposed changes in level, construction of hard surfaces, services and drainage as well as the monitored required during and post construction.
- Soft landscape: The detailed design of all landscaped areas including existing vegetation to be retained, in conjunction with details of proposed planting. The proposals must be in accordance with the submitted Landscape Masterplan. Particular details must include the following:
- The detailed design of soft landscape including species, planting density, and stock size;
- A specification setting out the standards and time frames for the implementation of soft landscape to include soil preparation / cultivation, details of planting and seeding, along with initial maintenance to ensure the successful establishment of vegetation; and
- An implementation programme. The implementation of planting (and in particular strategic vegetation to the site boundaries) should be phased in conjunction with the substantial completion of each area.
- Management: A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) to ensure the long-term management and maintenance. The management plan should include appropriate measures for the management of strategic planting to ensure its successful establishment and long-term maintenance. This should include the implementation of replacement vegetation as may be required to develop and maintain the landscape framework.

7.2.4 All of these measures can be successfully addressed and monitored by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of the development via conditions of the planning consent.

Construction

7.2.5 A number of residual adverse landscape and visual effects are highlighted during the construction phase. To manage the potential effects arising during construction work, it is recommended that in advance of works commencing a Construction Management Plan is prepared. The Construction Management Plan will include an outline of the proposed development, the sequencing of construction works and the management controls required with consideration of environmental effects.

7.2.6 The Construction Management Plan will include:

- The location and arrangement of site access and parking;
- The use of hoardings and fencing (including temporary fencing);
- The storage of construction materials and waste;
- Measures for the protection of existing vegetation and landscape areas (in accordance with BS5837:2012);
- Permitted working hours and use of lighting, including a detailed lighting specification;
- The implementation of planting (and where necessary proposed protection on the substantial completion of each phase); and
- Responsibilities, and monitoring/reporting measures including supervision by appropriately qualified personnel.

7.2.7 Implementation and Monitoring

7.2.8 During construction and at suitable intervals post completion the protection and condition of existing vegetation should be monitored by a qualified arboriculturist. The details for monitoring should be established in the Arboricultural Method Statement.

7.2.9 The influence of vegetation is highlighted in the assessment of both landscape and visual effects as it provides the structure and framework for the proposed development. All new planting must therefore be implemented in accordance with the detailed landscape drawings, specification and implementation programme and must be monitored by an appropriate qualified landscape professional.

Long-term Management

7.2.10 All areas should be managed in accordance with the standards and annual maintenance regime set out in the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to ensure that it is retained in a sustainable and well maintained condition in perpetuity.

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 General

8.1.1 This report assesses the landscape and visual impact of the proposed solar PV park on Land off Sturton Road, Great Sturton, Honrcastle, to support the planning application.

8.1.2 The report assesses the effects of the scheme on landscape character and visual amenity from the surrounding properties, roads, footpath network and public open spaces; from construction to completion. The assessment of effects is based on the submitted planning application drawings.

8.2 Baseline Conditions

8.2.1 The Site, which extends north of Sturton Road, a single track lane, and along its northern edge abuts Sotby Wood, represents redevelopment of greenfield land. The Site is made up of two large fields of arable farmland. The boundaries are typically mature hedgerow and are well vegetated, screening the majority of views in and out of the Site. The northern boundary is entirely screened by Sotby Woods. The proposals include for a small area of land to the south west of the Site to be developed for an ancillary Sub Station building, adjacent to an existing sub station. The Site, generally 'L' shape, is approx 79ha.

8.2.2 The extent of the study area is based on the potential visual envelope of the Site and proposed development i.e. the area from which views of the development may be visible, informed by topographical maps and field survey. The study area extends approximately 1km to the north east, south and south east, where views are then curtailed by the local topography and existing vegetation.

8.2.3 The landscape within the study area comprises the Central Lincolnshire Vale (NCA 44). More locally, the Site lies within the E1 Wragby to Horsington Vale Woodland and Farmland (as identified by the Landscape Character Assessment of East Lindsey District Council).

8.3 Landscape and Visual Effects

8.3.1 Land use of the site, and hence character, will alter as a direct result of development of the Site. However the Site itself is well contained by mature hedgerow vegetation along boundaries and localised changes in topography. The majority of the residual landscape effects are considered to be Negligible and None.

8.3.2 The surrounding gently undulating topography and layers of existing vegetation, establishes a Visual Envelope (VE), which is curtailed to the near distance, with middle and longer distance views being screened. Of the two viewpoints from the foot of the AONB, none experience any change in view. Sensitive receptors within the near distance VE include local PRoWs and users of Sturton Lane to the south of the Site.

8.3.3 The greatest level of visual effects will be experienced by those receptors within the near distance. Such effects will be mitigated by the design of the Proposed Development in terms of the retained existing mature hedgerows, in conjunction with new hedgerow planting, although it will take time for new planting to become established. Long-term adverse effects are considered to be Negligible in the majority.

8.4 Mitigation and Enhancement

8.4.1 The Proposed Development has been designed to minimise landscape and visual effects and create a positive setting to the surrounding area. As primary mitigation, the proposed landscape strategy seeks to deliver long-term landscape and biodiversity benefits. Residual adverse effects can be mitigated following the secondary mitigation strategy set out in section 7.2. Detailed design will incorporate comprehensive information on the specification and implementation of strategic planting.

8.5 Conclusion

8.5.1 It should be acknowledged that any development will give rise to change in the landscape of the area and the views of receptors. The degree of change will influence the judgement on acceptability and will need to be balanced with the overall benefits delivered by the scheme.

8.5.2 Although there will be localised visual and landscape effects, the p--roposed development will not dominate the view and will be a small component within a wider landscape. Strategic landscape infrastructure, retained mature hedgerows and enhancement of existing vegetation will help to visually integrate the development into the surrounding landscape.

8.5.3 The proposal responds to the local context in terms of character and visual sensitivities. The nature of the solar PV panels, ease of removal at end of useful life and the minimal impact to landscape character and visual amenity, lend this Site to the proposed use.

8.5.4 On balance, the Site is well contained within the wider landscape and visual effects are localised, with no impact upon the AONB. In conclusion, in landscape terms there are no overriding landscape or visual effects that should prevent the development of the Site as proposed.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sources of Information

Planning

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2021;
- Adopted Local Plan 2018 - Core Strategy.

Mapping and Other Data

- Ordnance Survey maps (1:20,000 Explorer Series);
- Historic Ordnance Survey maps;
- All LIDAR data © Environment Agency copyright and/or database right 2015. All rights reserved;
- Aerial images;
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) (http://magic.gov.uk/).

Landscape Character Documents

- National Character Area Profiles: NCA 44 Central Lincolnshire Vale (Natural England, 2012);
- Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for Lincolnshire 2011: WOL5 The Western Wolds Foothills LCT; and
- East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment 2009: E1 Wragby to Horsinton Vale Woodland and Farmland, and G3 Hainton to Toyton All Saints Wolds Farmland.

General

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Third Edition 2013);
- Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002);
- Visual Representation of Development Proposals. Technical Guidance Note 06/19. Landscape Institute, September 2019; and
- BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations (BSi, April 2012).

APPENDIX B: Criteria for Assessing Sensitivity

Table B1: Landscape Receptor Value and Susceptibility

Level	Value	Susceptibility
High	Landscape elements that are in good to excellent condition and are a fundamental component of landscape character. Alternatively a distinctive or rare landscape feature. These are likely, but not necessarily subject to statutory protection e.g. TPO's or Listed Buildings and/or given significant protection by planning policy. Landscapes that are in good condition, with a high prevalence of important landscape elements giving rise to a strong or unique character and sense of place. There are generally few detractors or uncharacteristic features present. These are likely, but not necessarily, statutory protected landscapes e.g. AONB, National Park, Registered Parks and Gardens recognised for their quality or cultural associations. Management objectives generally focused on conservation of landscape character.	• Low potential for mitigation. • No or very limited potential for substitution or replacement. • Limited / no capacity to accommodate the proposed development or change without affecting the baseline situation. • Proposals may substantially contradict management or policy objectives.
Medium	Landscape elements that are in good to average condition and make a contribution to defining landscape character. Elements may be protected by local planning policy. Landscapes that are in good to average condition with some important landscape elements giving rise to a positive character and recognisable sense of place, although some detracting features may be present. These may include local landscape designations e.g. Special Landscape Areas or other designations indicating local cultural or historic value. Management objectives generally focused on conservation and enhancement of landscape character.	• Some potential for mitigation. • Some potential for substitution or replacement. • Some capacity to accommodate the proposed development or change without affecting the baseline situation. • Proposals may be partly, but not entirely, in accordance with management or policy objectives.
Low	Landscape elements that are in average to poor condition. They may make a limited contribution to the character of the area or their contribution is reduced by their condition. Features or elements that are uncharacteristic and detract from the landscape character of the area. Landscapes that are in average to poor condition with evidence of erosion and limited sense of place. Some important landscape elements, however, detracting features notable. Designations are unlikely. Management objectives generally focused on enhancement and restoration of landscape character.	• Good or significant opportunities for mitigation. • Good potential for substitution or replacement. • Capacity to accommodate the proposed development / change without affecting the baseline situation, or with potential to enhance it. • Proposals generally in accordance with management or policy objectives.

Table B2: Visual Receptor Value and Susceptibility

Level	Value	Susceptibility
High	Visual amenity assessed as good to excellent; an area of high scenic value to include: Nationally recognised or important views such as those protected by policy e.g. National Park / AONB or a national trail / route. Designed views. Views to or from designated heritage assets. Views from recognised tourist destinations, views marked on maps or referred to in art / literature.	• Observers whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape to include: • Users of rights of way and recreation trails • Users of land with public access including Open Access and National Trust land. • Residential properties with views from rooms occupied during daylight / waking hours (predominantly ground floor).
Medium	Visual amenity assessed as average to good to include: Views which are locally recognised including those protected by local policy eg. visually important open space or special landscape area. To or from locally important heritage assets. Views from local destinations and well used footpath routes.	• Observers where views of the landscape are part of, but not the sole purpose of the activity to include: • Those playing or spectating at outdoor sports or undertaking formal outdoor recreation. • Users of local roads where there are clear / open views across the landscape and low levels of traffic. • Residential properties with views from rooms unoccupied during daylight / waking hours (predominantly first floor rooms).
Low	Areas of average to low visual amenity to include: Views which are not recognised or have limited value, such as footpaths which are not well used. Detracting features may be clearly apparent.	• Observers where attention is focused upon the activity and not the wider landscape to include: • Receptors engaged in sports or other activities. • Users of main roads travelling at speed, or local roads where the focus is on the road ahead. • Places of work / study.

Table B3: Sensitivity

		VALUE		
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
SUSCEPTIBILITY	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

APPENDIX C: Criteria for Assessing Magnitude of Change and Scale of Effect

Table C1: Magnitude of Landscape Change.

Magnitude of Effect *Extent of change*	Change Experienced as a result of development	
High	• Result in the permanent loss of characteristic landscape elements and features and/or their setting. • Introduce uncharacteristic or dominant elements. • Be at complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. • Substantially erode the landscape character and/or condition of the area. • Undermine any designation or the nature of a vulnerable landscape.	**NEGATIVE**
	• Retain the majority of existing landscape components and/or enable the full restoration and/or replacement of characteristic landscape elements and features. • Introduce new landscape elements and features that through good design enables a sense of place to be fully restored. • Have a strong contextual fit with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. • Substantially enhance the landscape character and/or condition of the area.	**POSITIVE**
Medium	• Result in the partial loss or alteration of characteristic landscape elements and features and/or reduce or remove their setting. • Introduce uncharacteristic components alongside characteristic features or elements. • Be at odds with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. • Be a noticeable change, although not necessarily uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. • Result in a deterioration of landscape character and/or condition.	**NEGATIVE**
	• Retain existing key features and/or enable partial restoration of characteristic landscape elements and features. • Introduce new landscape elements and features that through good design enables sense of place to be restored. • Fits well with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. • Enhance the landscape character and/or condition of the area.	**POSITIVE**

Table C1: Magnitude of Landscape Change. Continued

Magnitude of Effect *Extent of change*	Change Experienced as a result of development	
Low	• Result in the temporary or minor loss or alteration of landscape elements and features and/or reduce their setting. • Introduce some uncharacteristic components alongside characteristic features or elements. • Not quite fit with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. • Be a discernible change, although not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. • Result in a minor deterioration of landscape character and/or condition.	**NEGATIVE**
	• Retain existing key features and/or allow limited restoration of characteristic landscape elements and features. • Introduce new landscape elements and features that through good design enables some sense of place to be restored. • Respects the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. • Enables limited enhancement of the landscape character and/or condition of the area.	**POSITIVE**
Negligible	The development would introduce barely discernible elements or physical change to the landscape. Key characteristics of the landscape and its integrity are unaffected.	

Table C2: Nature and Magnitude of Visual Effects

Magnitude of Effect *Extent of change*	Change Experienced	
High	• Proposal results in the total, permanent loss of a highly valued view. • Proposal introduces dominant or discordant elements altering the composition or balance of the view. • Proposal introduces features not already present on / or part of the skyline.	NEGATIVE
	• Proposal removes substantial visual detractors. • Proposal introduces positive elements that substantially enhance the composition of the view. • Development introduces an immediately apparent landmark or feature.	POSITIVE
Medium	• Proposal is clearly visible and recognisable but not prominent in views. • Proposal introduces elements that are not necessarily already characteristic and/or are incongruous; • Development may form skyline features amongst existing development and/or vegetation.	NEGATIVE
	• Proposal removes some visual detractors. • Proposal is a visible but characteristic element complementing the composition of the view.	POSITIVE
Low	• Proposal is only a minor component or slightly uncharacteristic part of the view and does not introduce incongruous features and subsequently • Proposal does not alter the overall composition of the view or dominance or balance of elements within it and therefore might by missed by a casual observer.	NEGATIVE
	• Proposal removes limited visual detractors. • Proposal is only a minor component of the view and compliments the composition and balance of existing elements.	POSITIVE
Negligible	• Proposals perceived as a background component in view or are subservient to other elements within it. • The development would be barely discernible.	

Table C3: Scale of Effect for Landscape and Visual Effects

		MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE			
		HIGH	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**	**NEGLIGIBLE**
SENSITIVITY	**HIGH**	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	MEDIUM	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	LOW	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

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