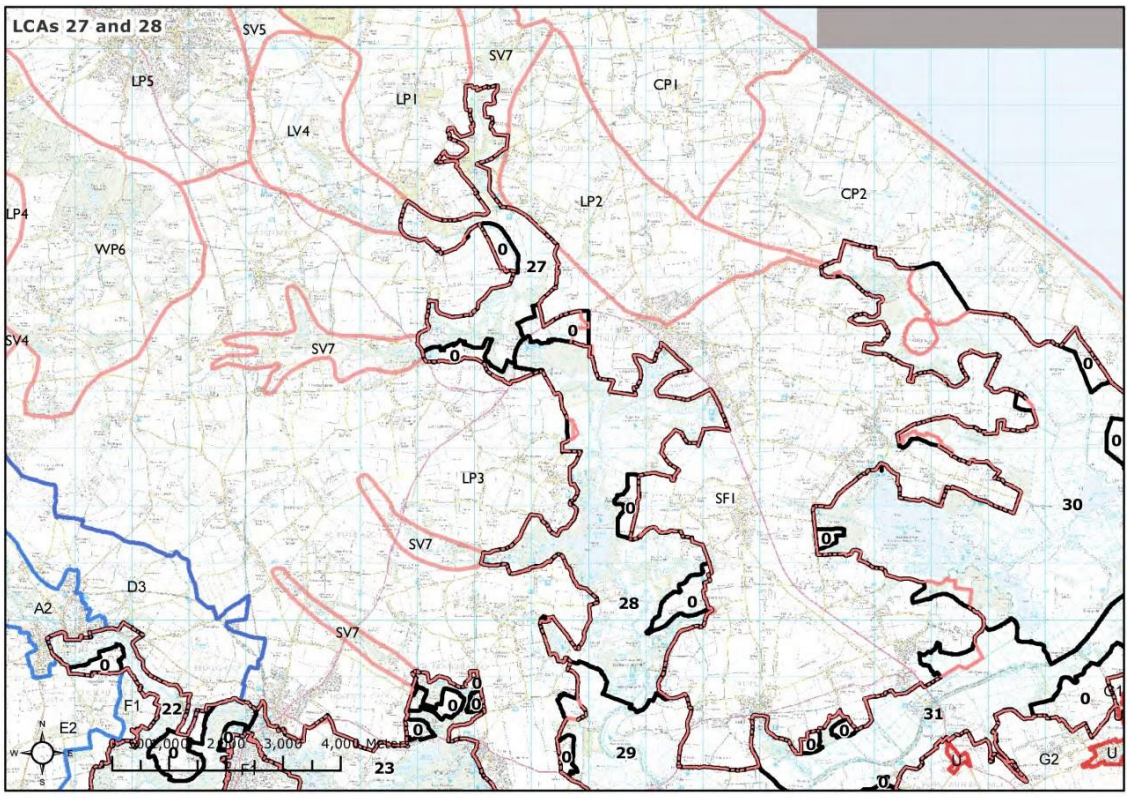
LCA 27: Ant Valley upstream of Wayford Bridge: LCA 28: Ant Valley downstream of Wayford Bridge

Location and landscape character context



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Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ⟷ Higher sensitivity
1.Scenic and special qualities	Both areas 27 and 28 have a high proportion of the special qualities which would be sensitive to solar PV development. Specifically these are the diversity of nature and habitats created by juxtaposition of ancient woodland (area 27), carr woodland, fen, marsh and reed ronds, which are all potentially vulnerable to solar PV land take. Also the sense of tranquillity and wildness evident in both character areas, and which could be interrupted by solar PV development.
2.Sense of openness / enclosure	The majority of the landscape of areas 27 and 28 has an intimate and enclosed character which indicates a relatively lower sensitivity to solar PV due to the containment afforded. However areas of open fen and grazing marsh/pasture which appear in both areas 27 and 28 would have a higher sensitivity to solar PV, due to the fact that such development would be more readily perceived in these locations.
3.Landscape and land cover pattern and scale	Both areas 27 and 28 are defined by a fairly complex, intricate landscape pattern which is created by the interplay of woodland/carr woodland, reed ronds, marsh and grazing pasture, fen and open water. Such landscape patterns would be vulnerable to dilution by solar PV development. Whilst parts of area 28 have a larger landscape scale due to the presence of Barton Broad and Sutton Fen to the north east, landscape texture remains intricate throughout and therefore sensitive for the above reasons.
4.Perception and experience of the landscape	A tranquil, rural character is evident in both areas 27 and 28. This is particularly the case in area 28, which, aside from the boatyard at Stalham, displays none of the more modern human interventions and intrusions which affect localised parts of area 27 (e.g. modern settlement edges in parts of Dilham and East Ruston). As such, the landscape of the two areas is highly sensitive overall to solar PV in terms of perception and experience.
5.Historic landscape character	A strong distribution of sensitive historic landscape types is apparent in both areas 27 and 28. For example ancient woodland within area 27 at Potter's Grove, plus areas of freshwater fen and 17th century and later rectilinear grazing marshes of often small scale. Within area 28, the medieval broads and areas of freshwater fen would also be sensitive to solar PV as this could affect the coherence of such features. Other aspects of historic landscape character in area 28 are closely related to human scale indicators which would be sensitive to solar PV, such as areas of small, traditional vernacular settlement at Neatishead, Barton Turf and Irstead.
6.Visual sensitivities and intervisibility	Landscapes of intimate spatial scale and of contained visual character which define much of areas 27 and 28 would have the lowest sensitivity to solar PV in visual terms. However, open fen within area 27 and which have higher intervisibility with adjacent landscapes beyond the Executive Area (North Norfolk landscape character type Coastal Plain CP1/CP2 to the east and the Low Plains Farmland type to the west – area LP1), and small parts of area 28 which are intervisible with North Norfolk District landscape types Settled Fen (area SF1) and Low Plain Farmland (area LP3), would be more sensitive. This would particularly be the case where the skyline is formed by valley sides in these areas. This results in a moderate overall sensitivity to solar PV in visual terms.

Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Areas 27 and 28 have a high overall landscape sensitivity to solar PV development in general. This is due to the representation of special qualities in the areas which would be sensitive to such development. Also the landscape pattern and scale, historic character and integrity, the sense of remoteness, and the areas of vernacular settlement in area 28 which would be sensitive to such modern development.				
Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	**Land within the character areas**		**Land outside the Executive Area**		
	Roof mounted requiring planning permission	**H**	Roof mounted requiring planning permission	**M**	
	Roof mounted - < 1 hectare	**H**	Roof mounted - < 1 hectare	**M-H**	
	Field mounted: Small - < 1 hectare	**H**	Field mounted: Small - < 1 hectare	**H**	
	Field mounted: Medium - 1 to 5 hectares	**H**	Field mounted: Medium - 1 to 5 hectares	**H**	
	Commentary: Character areas 27 and 28 would have a high sensitivity to roof mounted solar PV irrespective of size, due to the potential prominence of such structures and potential effects on vernacular settlement character. As such, sensitivity of both character areas to all types of solar PV would be high overall in landscape terms. ***Landscapes outside the Executive Area:*** Relevant character areas and sensitivities are: North Norfolk – CP1/CP2 Coastal Plain: Open, undeveloped skylines are sensitive. LP1 Edingthorpe to Honing Area: Evidence of some intervisibility with the Broads although some larger woodlands provide screening (Bacton and Honing Hall). LP3 Worstead, Coltishall, Hoveton and Smallburgh: The area is intervisible with the Broads landscape with views available from rising valley landform. SF1 Stalham, Ludham and Potter Heigham: Sense of enclosure is increased by the woodland fringe of adjoining Broads. Landscape sensitivity to roof mounted soar PV (which requires planning permission) would be moderate, whilst that to small scale roof mounted solar PV would be moderate high, although this would depend on siting and orientation in relation to the Broads. Due to the visual prominence of the valley landform and topographic features noted above in relation to the Broads, landscape sensitivities to larger scale solar PV are otherwise the same as for the Broads.				