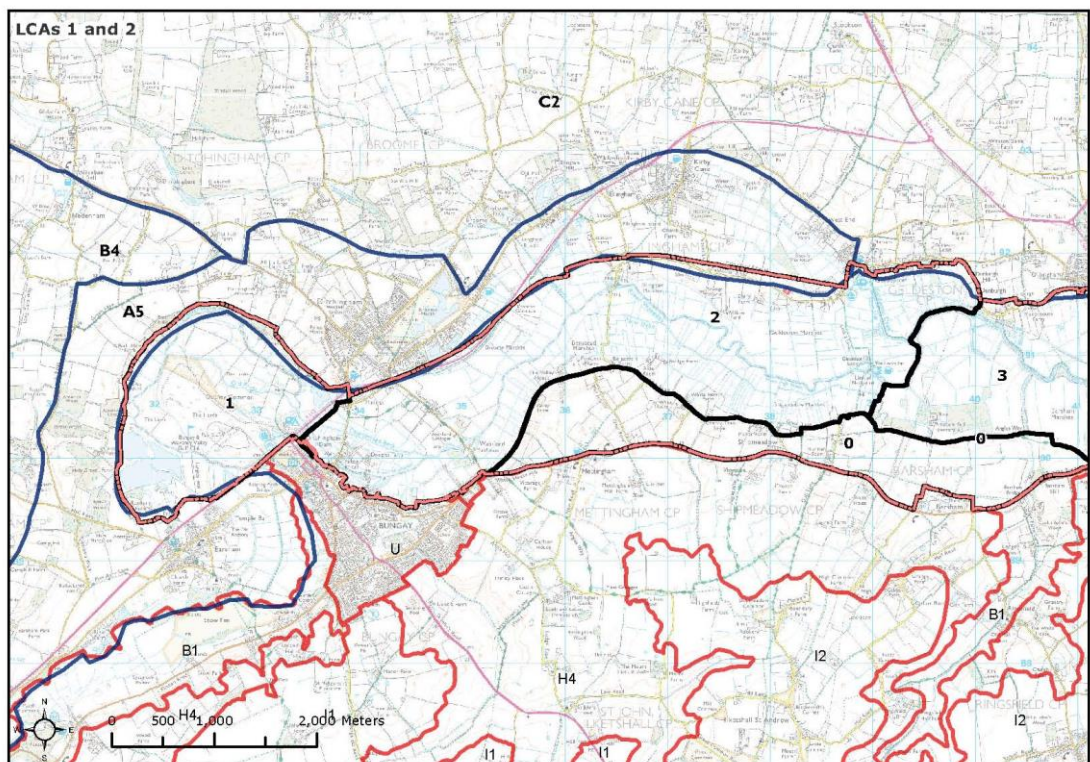


LCA 1: Waveney Valley - Outney Common and Bath Hills Area: LCA 2: Waveney Valley – Bungay/Ditchingham to Shipmeadow/Geldeston

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			
	<p>The character areas display a number of the Broads special qualities which are sensitive to solar PV development. Specifically these include the sense of tranquillity and the range and diversity of habitats associated with woodland, hedgerows and winding waterways which are particularly sensitive to solar PV and its associated footprint. Sensitivity is locally reduced close to Bungay due to large scale development on the perimeter of character area 1. However, overall the areas have a moderate-high sensitivity to solar PV development in these terms.</p>		
2.Sense of openness / enclosure			
	<p>Character area 1 is defined by a medium scale field pattern and more open areas of landscape which would indicate a lower sensitivity, while character area 2 has a small scale enclosed (hedgerow) field pattern where the river meanders through the area. This small scale pattern indicates a higher sensitivity to solar PV development due to land take. Both areas display similar characteristics such as rising valley sides with an enclosed landscape pattern, where hedgerows and tree cover filter views. Containment is provided by undulating landform, particularly in character area 1. Elsewhere this is enhanced by landscape elements such as wooded ridges and hedgerows. The areas, when combined, have a moderate sensitivity. This is due to the sense of enclosure and containment provided by hedgerows and landform, although the small scale field pattern increases sensitivity as a result of the likely field boundary loss.</p>		
3.Landscape and land cover pattern and scale			
	<p>The smaller scale field pattern of character area 2 would indicate a higher sensitivity to solar PV due to the potential of the development footprint to dilute the existing landscape pattern. However the medium scale landscape of character area 1 with its undulating topography and greater degree of screening provided by rising topography and wooded valley sides, reduces sensitivity. The areas have a moderate sensitivity to solar PV development in landscape pattern/scale terms.</p>		
4.Perception and experience of the landscape			
	<p>There is a strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness within both character areas although this is diluted somewhat closer to the settlement of Bungay where large scale development is apparent in area 1. This intrusion is however localised and the areas as a whole retain a sense of remoteness. This indicates a higher sensitivity to solar PV development due to the perceptual changes the development would introduce to an undeveloped area. The areas have a moderate-high sensitivity in perceptual terms.</p>		
5.Historic landscape character			
	<p>These areas retain a sense of historic character which is reflected in features such as the distinct medieval dole pattern and the traditional 17th century grazing marsh pattern which are of higher sensitivity to solar PV development due to vulnerability of such features to land take. This is primarily due to the potential effects of solar PV on the coherence of such landscape features. Also sensitive are the malting complexes and historic settlements (Geldeston, Bungay and Ellingham Mill) within character area 2 which have a strong association with the former water mills and the vernacular of the area which would be highly sensitive to solar farm development. Additional historic features such as the historic commons (The Hards) and the Bath Hills which are closely associated with the</p>		

	Ditchingham Estate are also sensitive to dilution of historic landscape pattern from solar PV development. When combined, these features indicate a clear sense of historic landscape character and as a result the areas are considered to be highly sensitive to solar PV development.			
6. Visual sensitivities and intervisibility				
	An enclosed landscape, defined by rising valley topography and surrounded by wooded skylines, providing a degree of containment, indicating a lower sensitivity to solar PV development in visual terms. Although contained, there is some intervisibility with adjacent character areas outside the Broads Executive Area (namely, areas A5 and B4 in South Norfolk District and area H4 in Waveney District). This is particularly evident where adjacent character areas are on higher ground (A5 and B4). This elevation provides a greater degree of visibility and as such these areas are more prominent in views. Although there is a level of structural screening provided by rising landform, the filtered views of elevated land in adjacent areas increase sensitivity, and therefore the sensitivity of the area is moderate-high in visual terms.			
Discussion on landscape sensitivity				
	Overall the landscape sensitivity to solar PV development is moderate-high. This is primarily due to the representation of special qualities within the areas including the sense of tranquillity and the diversity of nature. These characteristics are highly sensitive to solar PV development due to the potential of development footprint to impact upon the diversity of habitats and to create a developed landscape in an otherwise remote and tranquil area, resulting in a perceptual change to landscape character. Also sensitive to solar PV development is the historic landscape and settlement pattern which is vulnerable to change as a result of development footprint. It is however noted that the structural screening provided by landform and tree cover indicates a lower sensitivity and therefore the landscape has an overall moderate-high sensitivity to solar PV 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-H
	Roof mounted - < 1 hectare	H	Roof mounted - < 1 hectare	M-H
	Field mounted: Small - < 1 hectare	M-H	Field mounted: Small - <1 hectare	M-H
	Field mounted: Medium - 1 to 5 hectares	H	Field mounted: Medium - 1 to 5 hectares	H
	Commentary:			
<p>Although the character areas are sensitive to the majority of solar PV development, the landscape is less sensitive to small scale solar PV (less than one hectare) where field size can accommodate schemes of this size. However, this is subject to careful siting and avoidance of intervisibility where consideration should be given to landform and tree cover. The sensitive characteristics set out above must also be given close consideration so as to reduce any potential impacts, particularly on the tranquil character and the historic settlement and landscape pattern.</p> <p>Landscapes outside the Executive Area</p> <p>The relevant character areas and sensitivities are:</p> <p>South Norfolk– A5: Waveney Rural River Valley: Rising valley sides to the Broads which provide intervisibility.</p>				

	<p>B4: Waveney Tributary Farmland: Elevated land close to the Broads in the north.</p> <p>Waveney District - H4: Mettingham Tributary Farmland: Steeply rising valley sides (10-15m AOD) to the north and forms part of the landscape setting of the Broads abutting the Broads Authority boundary along much of its length.</p> <p>Fieldwork confirmed that sensitivity ratings for these areas for medium scale solar PV are high. Due to the elevated nature of the surrounding character areas, impacts upon skylines and views are of critical importance. However, these areas have a lower sensitivity to roof mounted and small scale field mounted solar PV development (up to one hectare) and this would depend entirely on siting (orientation of such development) and intervisibility in relation to the Broads.</p>
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