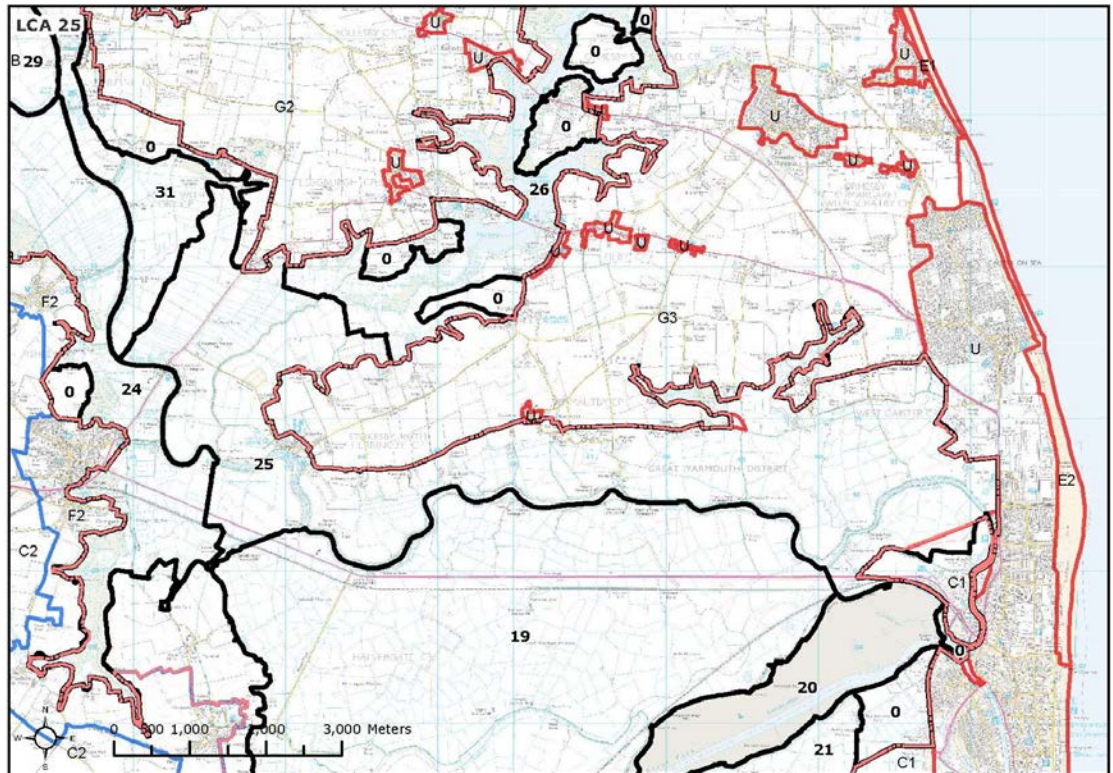


LCA 25: Bure Valley – Lower Bure Arable Marshlands

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>This character area displays a number of special qualities which would be sensitive to solar PV, notably the wide open landscape character and big skies and associated sense of space (the perception of which could be altered by land take and infrastructure associated with solar PV). Similarly, the area's remote and empty character (which relates to the special quality 'sense of tranquillity') would also be vulnerable to introduction of solar PV due to land take/footprint, although this would be locally reduced in proximity to the settlement edges at Great Yarmouth and Caister. Taking account of the above, the character area is highly sensitive to solar PV with regard to scenic and special qualities.</p>		
2.Sense of openness / enclosure			
	<p>Much of this landscape is of extremely open character (marshland) and this would be sensitive to solar array development footprints. Local enclosure created by carr woodlands and reed ronds would potentially lower landscape sensitivity, but the overall impression is of an open landscape which would be sensitive to solar PV.</p>		
3.Landscape and land cover pattern and scale			
	<p>The landscape pattern is relatively simple, being defined mostly by large scale rectilinear marshes and arable fields, albeit with localised complexity and variation provided by the presence of carr woodland fringed tributary valleys such as at Caister Castle. The wide bands of reed associated with the course of the Bure create textural variation, whilst human scale elements are introduced by small scale settlement such as Stokesby and also seasonally by sailing boats using the Bure. The generally simple landscape pattern would be less likely to be affected by solar PV development footprints, although elements such as carr woodlands and reed ronds would be more sensitive – moderate sensitivity to solar PV overall in terms of landscape/landcover pattern and scale.</p>		
4.Perception and experience of the landscape			
	<p>The generally tranquil landscape and remote landscape character, and sense of space and openness across much of the area, together with the mostly undeveloped skylines, would be sensitive to solar PV development. This would however be locally reduced in the eastern part of the character area, where the landscape is influenced by large scale coastal settlement edge influences. Overall, the landscape has a high sensitivity to solar PV in perceptual terms.</p>		
5.Historic landscape character			
	<p>Many of the historic landscape types and features of this area have been affected by boundary loss and resultant erosion of landscape pattern. However, historic features of this character area which would be sensitive to solar PV development are areas of small scale vernacular settlement such as Stokesby and the traditional wind pumps, together with the ruins of Caister Castle. These elements locally increase landscape sensitivity to solar PV to moderate-high in historic terms.</p>		
6.Visual sensitivities and intervisibility			
	<p>The expansive nature of views across the area and to the adjacent Halvergate Marshes mean that this landscape is visually sensitive to the introduction of elements such as solar PV (due to development footprint and potential visual impact on sense of openness). This is reinforced by the part intervisibility with adjacent character areas beyond the Broads Authority Executive Area (Great Yarmouth Borough character area G3: Ormesby and Filby Estate Farmland), albeit partly filtered by carr woodland. Given the visual influence on and of the Halvergate Marshes, this landscape character area is highly sensitive to solar PV in visual terms.</p>		

Discussion on landscape sensitivity					
	Overall landscape sensitivity to solar PV development is judged to be high. This is in view of the representation of special qualities sensitive to solar PV development, such as the sense of tranquillity, sense of space and the wide open landscape of big skies. The predominantly open and undeveloped skyline character and the level of intervisibility with other remote landscapes such as the Halvergate Marshes are also important to this sensitivity judgement.				
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	H	Field mounted: Small - < 1 hectare	M-H	
	Field mounted: Medium - 1 to 5 hectares	H	Field mounted: Medium - 1 to 5 hectares	H	
	<p>Commentary: Within the character area, landscape sensitivity to solar PV of all identified typologies would be high, due to the reasons outlined in the overall landscape sensitivity judgement above. As described above, roof mounted schemes of all sizes would have a greater sense of visual prominence in relation to the sense of openness of this character area.</p> <p>Landscapes outside the Executive Area Relevant landscape characteristics and key landscape sensitivities are: Great Yarmouth Borough G3: Ormesby and Filby Settled Farmland: Panoramic views albeit with carr woodlands providing filtering in relation to the Broads.</p> <p>Whilst the landscape would have slightly reduced (moderate-high) sensitivity in relation to the Broads, to roof mounted and smaller in field (sub 1 hectare) solar PV schemes, siting would be critical in relation to this judgement (avoidance of intervisibility issues in relation to the Broads). Landscape sensitivity to medium scale field solar PV would be higher due to potential impacts on landscape structure which may provide visual foiling in relation to the Broads.</p>				