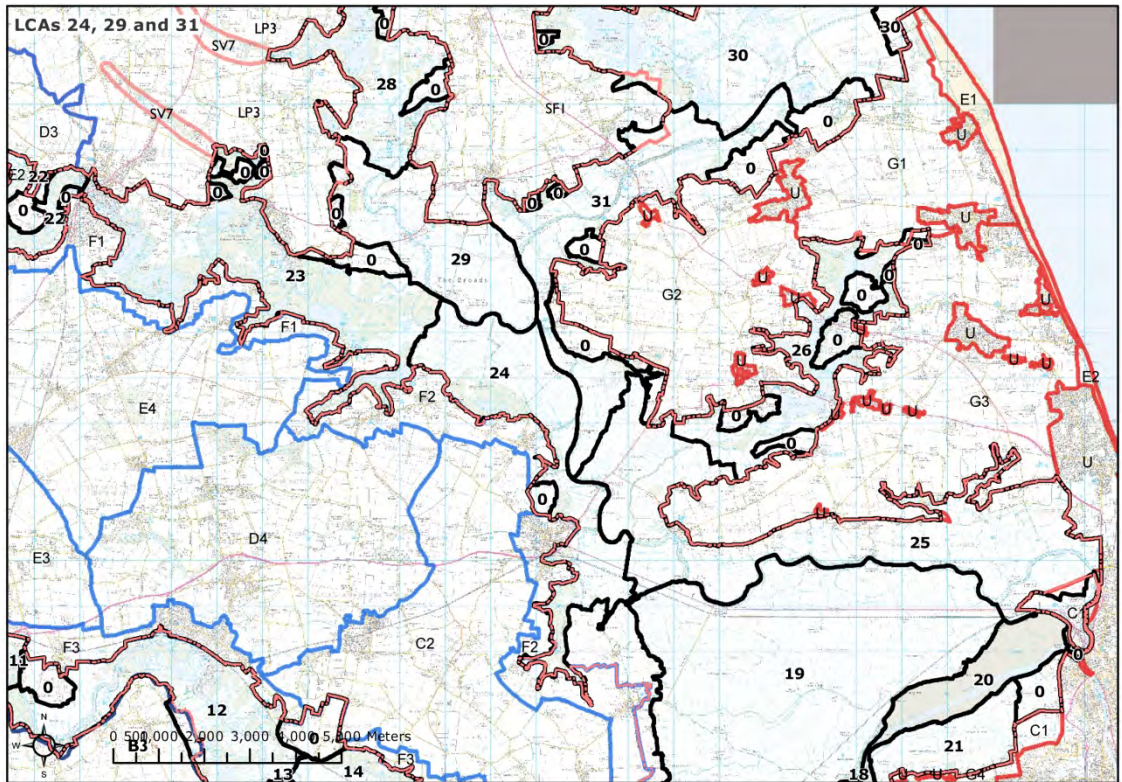


LCA 24: Bure Valley – South Walsham to Acle Marshes and Fens; 29:Ant and Bure Valleys – Ludham, Horning and Neatishead Grazing Marshes; 31: Thurne and Bure Valley – Martham Ferry to Oby

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 three character areas in this grouping all display special landscape qualities which would be sensitive to solar PV. For example area 24 is defined by a wide open landscape of big skies, as is area 29. This and the associated sense of space would potentially be affected by introduction of solar PV development. The diversity of habitat in areas 24 and 31 in particular, as represented by carr woodland, wooded broads at Upton Broad in area 29 and wooded fen at Womack Water in area 31 would also potentially be vulnerable to solar PV land take. All three areas have a sense of tranquillity, which solar PV would affect through development footprint, land take and introduction of additional man made elements – visual intrusion. The fact that all three areas afford riverine access and are well used by recreational boating traffic also indicates a degree of sensitivity due to the interest users have in their landscape. Given the above, the character areas have a high sensitivity to solar PV with regard to special qualities.</p>		
2.Sense of openness / enclosure			
	<p>The open visual character created by the marshland landscapes in all three areas would be highly sensitive to solar PV in view of the potential for visual intrusion of such structures and impacts on sense of space. Whilst sensitivity in these terms is locally decreased by locations which have a stronger sense of enclosure, such as the wooded landscapes around Upton Broad (area 24) and Womack Water/Horse Fen (area 31), the overall sense is of an open landscape (particularly in area 29), which would be sensitive to solar PV.</p>		
3.Landscape and land cover pattern and scale			
	<p>Although these three character areas for the most part have a simple character due to the presence of open marshland, much local variation in pattern is evident. This is due to the mosaic of carr woodland and broads at Upton Broad in the southern part of area 24, the subtlety of the dyke pattern and reeded river edges to all three areas and the woodland fringed tributaries and fens (Womack Water/Horse Fen) in area 31. The intricacy of these areas of woodland landscape would be highly sensitive to solar PV development due to the potential effect of development footprint, although these are variations in a landscape of otherwise relatively simple pattern. Overall sensitivity of the area grouping to solar PV is moderate-high.</p>		
4.Perception and experience of the landscape			
	<p>The tranquil character created in these areas by expansive, open and predominantly undeveloped marshland, and by wooded broads such as Upton Broad and wooded fens at Horse Fen would be highly sensitive to solar PV, due to the perceptual change such structures would introduce. Localised intrusions such as larger buildings outside the Executive Area in Upton and which form part of the southern skyline to area 24, and the Somerton Windfarm which is intervisible with area 29, reduce sensitivity. This is due to introduction of developed elements, although sensitivity is judged moderate-high overall for these three character areas.</p>		
5.Historic landscape character			
	<p>The small scale early enclosures (17th century and later) created by the network of boundary dykes within all three areas and particularly areas 24 and 29 would be sensitive to solar PV developments due to their potential effect on the coherence of this landscape pattern, and due to the effects of land take. Also sensitive are areas of carr woodland and small scale wooded broads such as area 24 (Upton Broad), for the same reasons. Area 29 possesses some notable scheduled historic archaeological resources which are visually prominent and whose visual and cultural setting would be sensitive to introduction of further development such as solar PV, e.g. St</p>		

	Benet's Abbey. This increases landscape sensitivity in historic terms. Within area 31, remnant medieval landscapes such as Womack Water (former medieval broad) would also be sensitive due to the cohesiveness of the landscape pattern. Given the above, this area cluster has a high sensitivity to solar PV in historic landscape character terms.			
6. Visual sensitivities and intervisibility				
	The areas of open marshland character and the level of intervisibility with adjacent landscapes to the north and south of area 24 and in area 29 (views to farmland within Great Yarmouth Borough to the north and, specific to area 24, to Broadland District to the south) would be highly sensitive to solar PV due to potential issues of visual influence. Intervisibility is less in area 31 (the western part of the area in particular) due to the intermittent blocks of carr woodland to the area's boundaries (including the valley tributaries at Womack Water). However, the more open landscape and visual character to the east creates greater intervisibility with adjacent landscapes in Great Yarmouth Borough and North Norfolk District, and therefore high sensitivity to solar PV in visual terms.			
Discussion on landscape sensitivity				
	Overall landscape sensitivity of this area grouping to solar PV development is high. This is due to the representation of special qualities sensitive to solar PV in these areas, specifically the sense of tranquillity, the wide open landscape, sense of space and big skies which characterise many parts of all three areas. Also the diversity of habitat mosaics in areas 24 and 31, which would be vulnerable to solar PV development footprints. Other important characteristics of these landscapes which contribute to this sensitivity rating in relation to solar PV are the open visual character of the marshland landscapes in all three areas. Also important are the historic landscape pattern, such as small scale rectilinear dykes, medieval broads and Womack Water (area 31) and wooded broads at Upton Broad (area 24), and prominent historic assets such as St Benet's Abbey and causeway within area 29.			
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	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: Roof mounted solar PV of all sizes in the typology would have the potential to exacerbate impacts on perceptual characteristics of these areas and associated special qualities such as sense of space and tranquillity, and in terms of views and intervisibility. Accordingly, landscape sensitivity of this character area grouping to all solar PV typologies set out in this study, is high.</p> <p>Landscapes outside the Executive Area Relevant character areas and sensitivities are:</p> <p>Great Yarmouth Borough: G1 East Flegg Settled Farmland: The wooded landscape of the Broads, notably the carr woodlands at Ormesby Broad, forms a prominent backdrop which contains views in that direction. G2 West Flegg Settled Farmland: Small scale field pattern persists around villages and on the edges of the Broads where woodland and areas of</p>			

	<p>parkland occur. Also evident are views across the lowland wetlands of the Broads.</p> <p>G3 Ormesby and Filby Settled Farmland: Shares similar characteristics with the area but views from the Broads are filtered by woodland.</p> <p>Broadland District:</p> <p>C2 Freethorpe Plateau Farmland: Partial views over descending wooded slopes to the Broads, and associated strong but low horizon.</p> <p>D4: Blofield Tributary Farmland: the rising farmland forming the valley side is visually sensitive.</p> <p>F2 South Walsham to Reedham: Horizons wooded in places, but some areas facilitate views over adjacent broads, lowland rivers and marshes.</p> <p>North Norfolk:</p> <p>SF1 Stalham, Ludham and Potter Heigham: The sense of enclosure is increased by the woodland fringe of adjoining Broads.</p> <p>There would be slightly lower landscape sensitivity to smallest scale (roof mounted) and 'in field' solar PV, although this would depend entirely on orientation in relation to the Broads.</p>
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