Glebe Farm

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

R01

24th February 2025

Prepared on Behalf of Glebe Farm Solar Limited

tir collective
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 Tir Collective is instructed by Glebe Farm Solar Limited to prepare this Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) which relates to the proposed 38.78MW solar farm on land Glebe Farm, Ropsley, Grantham. The site covers 68 hectares, as shown on **Figure LA.01 Site location**. The solar farm development would be for a temporary period of 50 years.

1.2 Scope of the Assessment

1.2.1 The proposed solar farm development would comprise a 38.78MW output for a temporary period of 50 years, associated infrastructure and environmental enhancements.

1.2.2 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) provides an assessment of the effects of the proposed development, on the landscape of the site and its context. The design of the proposed development and the identification of mitigation measures incorporated within the design to minimise adverse effects, is informed by the findings of the assessment process as it progressed. In this LVApp, effects on features identified as important to the scenic quality, or effects on the landscape character of the site and its setting are assessed. Effects on peoples' views of the site and its setting, or visual amenity, are also assessed.

1.2.3 For the purposes of assessing the landscape and visual effects of this proposal, study areas have been defined:

- The site extends to the redline boundary as shown on **Figure LA.01**
- The wider landscape context extends 3km from the site boundary, see **Figure LA.04**
- The visual study area extends 3km from the site boundary, see **Figures LA.08**

1.2.4 The objectives of the assessment are to:

- Describe and evaluate the landscape of the site and surrounding landscape context and the visual amenity of people in the surrounding area, which might be affected by the proposed development;
- Provide an input into the site layout, and to make recommendations for mitigation measures which can be incorporated into the development scheme;
- Examine the development proposals and analyse the potential effects on the landscape and visual amenity associated with the proposed development;
- Set out mitigation measures which could be implemented in order to avoid, reduce or offset adverse effects and, where possible, incorporate these in the scheme design;

- Provide an assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development with integral mitigation measures in place.

1.2.5 The LVApp is presented with separate sections dealing with effects on landscape effects and visual amenity effects. The LVApp is illustrated by plans and photographs (see **Appendix 1**) as follows:

Figure List

- **Figure** **LA.01** Site Location
- **Figure** **LA.02** Designations
- **Figure** **LA.03** Public Access
- **Figure** **LA.04** Landscape Character Assessments
- **Figure** **LA.05** Topography
- **Figure** **LA.06** Site Context
- **Figure** **LA.07** Site Photographs
- **Figures** **LA.08** Zone of Theoretical Visibility plans
- **Figure** **LA.09** Context Views
- **Figures** **LA.10** Viewpoints

1.2.6 Detailed information is presented in Appendices as follows:

- **Appendix 2** Assessment methodology
- **Appendix 3** Assessment of effects

1.3 Assessment Methodology

1.3.1 The methodology used for assessing the landscape and visual effects is based on the recommendations in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition, published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in 2013 (GLVIA3), as set out in Appendix 2.

1.3.2 The Landscape Institute has advised in relation to Landscape & Visual Appraisals outside a formal EIA process in its "Statement of Clarification 1/13"[1]:

> In carrying out appraisals, the same principles and process as LVIA may be applied but, in so doing, it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant given that the exercise is not being undertaken for EIA purposes. … The emphasis on likely 'significant effects' in formal LVIA stresses the need for an

[1] GLVIA Statement of Clarification 1/13 10-06-13 https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/glvia3-clarifications/

approach that is proportional to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its likely effects. The same principle – focussing on a proportional approach – also applies to appraisals of landscape and visual impacts outside the formal requirements of EIA.

1.3.3 The assessment process comprises a combination of desk studies and field surveys, with subsequent analyses, and involved:

- A review of landscape designations and planning policies for the landscape, and of other landscape studies relevant to the area, including national and local landscape character assessments;
- A survey of the site and landscape context study areas and inspection of views of the site from publicly accessible viewpoints, including a photographic survey. The surveys were carried out by a Chartered Landscape Architect on 3rd March 2023 during dry weather with good visibility;
- Evaluation of the features and elements of the landscape and their contribution to the landscape character, context and setting, based on these studies;
- Analysis of the development proposals and consideration of potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development;
- Assessment of the susceptibility and sensitivity of the landscape to the changes likely to arise from the development;
- Identification of the extent of theoretic visibility of the proposed development and viewers, their susceptibility and sensitivity, and view locations, supported by a viewpoint analysis; and
- Assessment of magnitude of change arising from the proposal, the degree and nature of effects on the landscape and on visual amenity with the mitigation proposals in place.

Assessment and Mitigation

1.3.4 The effects of the development, whether beneficial or adverse, may vary in nature and degree through its lifecycle and, where feasible, mitigation measures are proposed to be incorporated in the design of the development. Where design measures cannot address identified likely adverse effects, measures such as management of the construction, operational, and decommissioning processes. The purpose of mitigation measures is first, to prevent or avoid the potentially adverse effects identified, and if that is not possible, to reduce the potential adverse effect. Where adverse effects are unavoidable, the purpose is to offset or compensate for the effect.

1.3.5 Details of the criteria for assessing landscape effects and visual effects are set out in those respective sections.

Guidance

1.3.6 In addition to GLVIA3, the following sources of guidance will be referred to:

- Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 **Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition** (GLVIA3), published August 2024
- Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02/21 **Assessing landscape value outside national designations**[2]
- Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note, **Visual Representation of Development Proposals**, September 2019[3]

1.3.7 Relevant policy, landscape character assessments and other contextual information sources will be referred to, including:

- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England 2014[4]
- Natural England National Character Profiles, September 2014[5]

1.3.8 Relevant policy, landscape character assessments and other contextual information sources will be referred to, including:

- Policies relevant to the landscape and visual amenity in national, regional, and local policy including the South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036
- South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment (January 2007)

Photography

1.3.9 Photographs have a special role in describing landscape character and illustrating key views. In order for photographs to be representative and to create an image that is as similar as possible to that which is seen with the human eye, the Landscape Institute (LI) advises using a lens with a focal length equivalent to 50mm for a 35mm Single Lens Reflex (SLR) camera, and a horizontal field of view of a little under 40 degrees. The equipment used for the appraisal photography includes:

- A Canon EOS 5D Mark iii digital SLR camera with a full frame sensor;
- Canon 50mm EF 1:1.8 II lens; and

[2] https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2021/05/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations.pdf
[3] https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/visualisation/
[4] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691184/landscape-character-assessment.pdf
[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles

- Manfrotto tripod and panoramic head.

1.3.10 Photographs were taken with a focal length of 50mm.

1.3.11 Landscape photography includes wide angle or panoramic views requiring a sequence of photographs to be taken across the view. Where this approach is taken, a series of overlapping photographs are digitally spliced together in Photoshop CC using a cylindrical projection to provide a panorama approximating to the normal field of view in a landscape context. Where necessary, the contrast and brightness of individual photographs is slightly manipulated in order to create a consistent panorama without visible joins.

1.3.12 The viewpoint locations were established using a camera mounted GPS device and verified against Ordnance Survey grid reference and height above Ordnance Datum.

Weather

1.3.13 The weather is a factor affecting the assessment of, especially, visual impacts. The Met Office[6] publish average statistics for weather patterns for the region, monthly and annual, for maximum and minimum temperatures, days of air frost, hours of sunshine, amount of rainfall - both generally and the number of days when rainfall is above 1mm. For Cranwell, the nearest Climate station to where the site is located:

- Rainfall above 1mm per day, which limits visibility, occurs on an average of 117 days in the year, about 32% of the year.
- There are on average 43 days when air frost occurs, which can produce hazy conditions limiting visibility, about 12% of the year.
- There is an average of 1631 hours of sunshine per annum for the station, more than the England E & NE District average of 1493 hours.

2.0 Landscape Policies and Designations

2.1 National Planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated 12 December 2024[7], sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPPF 'is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.'

[6] The data quoted are those for Dunkeswell Aerodrome, Devon, England SW & Wales S, obtained from The Met Office website: Cranwell Location-specific long-term averages

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

2.1.2 The key principles that are of relevance to landscape and the proposed development include:

- **Section 2: Achieving sustainable development, paragraph 8** states "Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent:

  […]

  c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural… environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity… and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

  Paragraph 9 goes onto state that "Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area."

  Paragraph 10 states "… at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development."

- **Section 12: Achieving well-designed places, paragraph 135** states "planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

  […]

  b) are visually attractive as a result of… appropriate and effective landscaping;

  c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding… landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change;

  d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place…

  […]"

- **Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change, paragraph 166** states "In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:

  a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and

  b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

- **Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, paragraph 187** states "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes… (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside…

[…]"

NPPF Planning Practice Guidance: Renewable and low carbon energy

2.1.3 The Renewable and low carbon energy Guidance published 14 August 2023 helps local councils in developing policies for renewable and low carbon energy and identifies the planning considerations[8]. Of relevance to the proposed development and landscape and visual aspects is:

- "Why is planning for renewable and low carbon energy important?

  … Planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable."

- "Do criteria-based policies have a role in planning for renewable energy?

  …In…considering planning applications… it is important to be clear that:

  - the need for renewable or low carbon energy does not automatically override environmental protections;

  - cumulative impacts require particular attention, especially the increasing impact that… large scale solar farms can have on landscape and local amenity as the number of… solar arrays in an area increases;

  - local topography is an important factor in assessing whether… large scale solar farms could have a damaging effect on landscape and recognise that the impact can be as great in predominately flat landscapes as in hilly or mountainous areas;

  […]

  - proposals in… Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and in areas close to them where there could be an adverse impact on the protected area, will need careful consideration;

  - protecting local amenity is an important consideration which should be given proper weight in planning decisions."

- "What are the planning considerations that relate to specific renewable energy technologies?

  Renewable energy developments should be acceptable for their proposed location…"

[8] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy

- "What are the particular planning considerations that relate to large scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic farms?

  The deployment of large-scale solar farms can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in undulating landscapes. However, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively.

  Particular factors a local planning authority will need to consider include:

  […]

  - that solar farms are normally temporary structures and planning conditions can be used to ensure that the installations are removed when no longer in use and the land is restored to its previous use;

  - the proposal's visual impact, the effect on landscape of glint and glare (see guidance on landscape assessment) and on neighbouring uses and aircraft safety;

  […]

  - the need for, and impact of, security measures such as lights and fencing;

  - the potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts through, for example, screening with native hedges;

  […]

  The approach to assessing cumulative landscape and visual impact of large-scale solar farms is likely to be the same as assessing the impact of wind turbines. However, in the case of ground-mounted solar panels it should be noted that with effective screening and appropriate land topography the area of a zone of visual influence could be zero."

2.2 Local Planning policy

2.2.1 The site lies within the boundaries of South Kesteven. Planning policy for the area is provided by the South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted January 2020[9]. Relevant policies relating to site and the proposed development are outlined below.

South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036

- **SD1: The Principles of Sustainable Development** in South Kesteven states that "Development proposals in South Kesteven will be expected to minimise the impact on

[9] Local_Plan_2011-2036_(Final_inc_covers)_(1).pdf

climate change and contribute towards creating a strong, stable and more diverse economy. Development proposals shall consider how they can proactively minimise:

a. the effects of climate change and include measures to take account of future changes in the climate;

[…]

Development proposals shall consider how they can proactively enhance the District's

j. character;

k. natural environment

l. cultural and heritage assets

m. services and infrastructure, as needed to support development and growth proposals"

- **SP5: Development in the Open Countryside** states that "Development in the open countryside will be limited to that which has an essential need to be located outside of the existing built form of a settlement."
- **Policy EN1** concerns **Landscape Character** and states that "Development must be appropriate to the character and significant natural, historic and cultural attributes and features of the landscape within which is it situated, and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration".
- **Policy EN2** relates to **Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity** and states "The Council…will facilitate the conservation, enhancement and promotion of the District's biodiversity and geological interest of the nature environment. This includes seeking to enhance ecological networks and seeking to deliver a net gain on all proposals, where possible."
- **Policy EN3: Green Infrastructure** states "The Council will maintain and improve the green infrastructure network in the District by enhancing, creating and managing green space within and around settlements that are well connected to each other and the wider countryside.

  Development proposals should ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is considered and integrated into the scheme design, taking opportunities to enrich biodiversity habitats, enable greater connectivity and provide sustainable access for all. Proposals which may result in recreational and visitor pressure on designated biodiversity sites will be particularly expected to provide such green infrastructure.

  Proposals that cause loss or harm to this network will not be permitted unless the need for and benefits of the development demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts. Where

adverse impacts on green infrastructure are unavoidable, development will only be permitted if suitable mitigation measures for the network are provided."

- **Policy RE1: Renewable Energy Generation** states that "Proposals for renewable energy generation will be supported…"

2.3 Designations

2.3.1 Designations provide an indication of landscape value. They are areas that have been recognised for the scenic beauty and recreational potential of the landscape. Designations within 3km of the site are shown on **Figure LA.02.**

National Parks and National Landscapes (formally AONB)

2.3.2 There are no National Parks or National Landscapes within or close to the 3km study area, these statutory designations are therefore excluded from further consideration within this appraisal.

Ancient Woodland

2.3.3 There are no areas of Ancient Woodland within 1km of the site boundary. The closest Ancient Woodland is located approximately 2.2km to the southeast at Heydour Southings.

Historic and cultural landscape designations

2.3.4 Relevant historic and cultural designations are shown on **Figure LA.02**.

2.3.5 The setting of historic and cultural designations is a consideration during the preparation of landscape and visual assessments as these features inform the overall landscape character, quality and value of the area. This LVApp does not address the effects on heritage assets however it considers the contribution these features make to landscape value and scenic quality.

Conservation areas and listed buildings

2.3.6 The closest conservation area to the site is located 758m to the east at the hamlet of **Oasby**. An appraisal and management plan for Oasby conservation area is not yet available at the time of writing[10].

2.3.7 The conservation area at Oasby contains a number of **listed buildings**, including Grade II* listed Oasby Manor House (circa 890m east of the site boundary), along with a several of other Grade II listed dwellings and a public house.

[10] Conservation Area Appraisals | South Kesteven District Council (accessed February 2025)

2.3.8 There is a further series of listed buildings in the wider landscape, including a concentration in the village of Welby 1.25km southwest of the site. Grade I listed Church of St Bartholomew is located in the village. Elsewhere in the study area at greater distance from the site, there is a sparse scattering of listed buildings in villages and hamlets.

Scheduled Monuments

2.3.9 There are no **Scheduled Monuments** within 1km of the site boundary. Within the wider 3km study area, there are three Scheduled Monuments, the closest being at the **Castle Hills ringwork and bailey**, approximately 1.5km to the east of the site close to Heydour[11], designated for its significance to the understanding of Saxon and Norman fortifications. There is also a Scheduled Monument at the **Site of Cistercian Grange** approximately 1.9km to the south of the site[12]. A further Scheduled Monument is located on the fringes of the 3km study area at Roman Villa, Haceby[13].

Registered Parks and Gardens

2.3.10 The only historic registered park and garden within the 3km study area is **Culverthorpe Hall**, circa 2.4km east of the site. The Grade II listed park and garden is open to the public, described as "a country house with an early C20 garden, set in a park with woodland and formal features laid out from the C17 onwards"[14]

2.3.11 **Belton House** registered park and garden is located circa 3.2km to the west of the site. Due to its separation from the site by intervening topography, it is scoped out from further consideration in this LVApp.

Ecological designations

2.3.12 Ecological designations, although not specifically related to landscape amenity and not assessed within this report, are an indication of landscape value. Relevant ecological designations are shown on **Figure LA.02.**

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

2.3.13 **Wilsford Heath Quarry** SSSI is the nearest to the site, which is is located 1.2km to the north. Two other SSSI sites are located beyond 2km of the site to the north.

Local Wildlife Sites

2.3.14 There are several Local Wildlife Sites within the 3km study area, including linear sites along hedgerows/ road verges. The hedgerow/ road verge along the local road that abuts the east

[11] Castle Hills ringwork and bailey, Heydour - 1019977 | Historic England (accessed February 2025)
[12] Site of Cistercian grange, Ropsley and Humby - 1005038 | Historic England (accessed February 2025)
[13] Roman villa, Haceby, Newton and Haceby - 1005036 | Historic England (accessed February 2025)
[14] CULVERTHORPE HALL, Culverthorpe and Kelby - 1000974 | Historic England (accessed February 2025)

boundary of the site is a local wildlife site[15], along with a part of the hedgerow/ road verge along Mill Lane that abuts the south boundary of the site. Within the wider landscape, there are several areas that are locally protected as wildlife sites, including Nightingale Plantation, circa 1.7km to the southeast and Abney Wood, 2.2km to the southwest.

Public access

2.3.15 Public rights of way and access land are shown on **Figure LA.03.**

2.3.16 There are no Long Distance Footpaths or National Cycle Routes in or close to the 3km study area, they are therefore scoped out from further consideration within this LVApp.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

2.3.17 There are no public rights of way within the site, but a bridleway connects to the western boundary of the site, linking it to Welby and the B6403 via Welby Pastures Farm. Beyond the immediate vicinity of the site, some public rights of way transect farmland to the northwest and southeast of the site.

2.3.18 Beyond 1km of the site boundary, public rights of way are predominantly concentrated in the eastern half of the study area, extending from the settlements of Kelby, Culverthorpe, Oasby, and Aisby. These routes provide connections to scattered farmsteads and residential properties.

Open Access Land

There is one area of Open Access Land within the 3km study area: **Ancaster Valley Nature Reserve**, which is located approximately 2.3km to the north of the site and it nearest point. The narrow area of land extends north beyond the 3km study area. Due to its setting within a valley, which separates it from the site, it is scoped out from further consideration in this LVApp.

3.0 The proposed development

3.1.1 Details of the proposed development are described in detail in the drawings and documents supporting this planning application. This section describes the main aspects of the proposed development which could potentially affect landscape and/or visual amenity. It also identifies features of the proposals which will assist in mitigating adverse landscape and visual impacts.

3.1.2 The main feature of the proposed solar farm is the installation of ground mounted solar PV panels and mounting system, underground cabling, stock proof fence, CCTV, internal tracks and associated infrastructure. The solar arrays would be supported using pile driven steel

[15] SKDC_Main_Map_2019_300dpi1.pdf (accessed February 2025)

posts. They would be oriented to the south with a tilt of c20 degrees, the lowest edge of the panels would be 800mm above the ground and the highest edge would be 3.2m above the ground.

3.1.3 Access to the solar farm would be via an existing route that connects to the B3181.

Sources of Potential Effects on Landscape and Views

3.1.4 The main features of the of the proposed solar farm development which could potentially result in landscape and visual are set out below.

Construction phase

3.1.5 The duration of the construction of the site is expected to be 6 - 9 months and would include the following:

- The removal of agricultural crops within the site where the solar arrays are to be installed.
- The installation of a temporary construction compound.
- The installation of ground mounted PV panels, internal access tracks that utilises existing tracks where possible, transformers, inverters on loose hardcore, perimeter security fencing, and pole mounted CCTV cameras.
- Activities in relation to the construction of the proposed development, including deliveries, the movement of vehicles on site, and the installation of the PV panels, access tracks and other associated infrastructure.

Operational phase

3.1.6 Planning consent is sought for a 50 year operational period, which would be reversible, and would include the below activities:

- The change of use of the site from arable farmland to a solar farm underplanted with grassland.
- The introduction of the solar farm and ancillary structures within the landscape.
- Operational activities such as vehicle movement associated with routine inspections and maintenance of the proposed development.
- The establishment of landscape proposals such as trees, native planting and grass mixes.

Decommissioning phase

3.1.7 The decommissioning phase would only apply to the areas where solar arrays are to be installed. The proposed planting would be permanent. Decommissioning is expected to be 6-9 months and would include the following:

- Similar changes to the construction phase would occur but in reverse, during which the ground installations including solar arrays and CCTV cameras would be dismantled and removed from site.

Mitigation measures

3.1.8 The potential for adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity has been recognised and mitigation measures incorporated in the scheme to avoid or reduce adverse effects or to offset or compensate for unavoidable adverse effects.

3.1.9 Mitigation and enhancement measures incorporated into the scheme design include:

- Photovoltaic panels are to be aligned inside of existing field boundaries to avoid the removal of vegetation and to ensure the existing field pattern is retained.
- Hedgerows to be managed to allow significant structure to develop.
- New loose hardcore gravel access tracks would follow existing access routes and access between fields utilising existing field gateways where possible.
- Security fencing is to be offset from hedgerows and tree canopy edges to ensure existing vegetation is not damaged or disturbed.
- Cabling is to be bored under hedgerows and trees to avoid disturbance to sensitive landscape elements and to prevent the inclusion of unsightly cabling bridges.
- Limited site infrastructure ensures construction and decommissioning can be achieved with little disturbance.
- Strengthening and gapping up of hedgerows to reduce visual effects and reinforce these landscape elements which make an important contribution to landscape character.
- Some native trees and groups of native shrub planting is proposed along field boundaries to help screen and filter views of the proposed development which enhancing existing field pattern.
- Creation of buffers at least 10m in width, between sensitive boundary habitats and development footprint.
- New native species hedgerows will be planted in gaps to increase connectivity across the site and compensate for some potential minor losses required to facilitate access.

4.0 Effects on the Landscape

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section deals with the effects on the landscape of the site and its surrounding context due to the proposed development of the site.

Assessment Criteria

4.1.2 The assessment process follows the methodology for assessing effects set out in **Appendix 2**. The degree of the likely landscape effects of the proposed development is determined by relating the sensitivity of the receptors to the changes arising from the development proposals, and the degree and nature of the changes in the landscape arising from the proposals.

Landscape Baseline

4.1.3 The landscape baseline is a description and analysis of the existing landscape, against which the effects of the proposed development are assessed, first, by reference to landscape character assessments for the area in which the site is located, at national and local levels and then, from site-specific surveys and analysis carried out for the purposes of this assessment.

4.2 National Landscape Character Assessment

4.2.1 The desk study has made reference to National Character Areas for England. National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each NCA 'is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.'

4.2.2 The site is located in **National Character Area 47: South Lincolnshire Edge**. The key characteristics are identified as[16]:

- **Elevated arable escarpment** with a distinct cliff running north–south along the western boundary, providing far-reaching views over the Trent and Belvoir Vales NCA.
- Productive loamy soils on the limestone plateau, giving rise to a **large-scale open landscape of arable cultivation** with **large, regular fields** and **few boundaries of tightly cut hedgerows** or **rubble limestone walls**.
- Heavy clay soils in the east and south-west of the area, which support more grazing land in smaller, less regular fields, along with small areas of woodland and parkland.

[16] Southern Lincolnshire Edge - National Character Area Profiles (Accessed February 2025)

- **Semi-natural habitats in small, isolated fragments**, with pockets of woodland on clay soils, fen at the foot of the dip slope and **flower-rich limestone grassland, particularly along road verges**.
- **Sparse settlement on higher land**, with springline villages along the foot of the cliff, parklands and country estates such as Rauceby and Belton on lower ground, and larger settlements – including Sleaford, Ruskington and Metheringham – to the east of the dip slope.
- Active and re-used airfields prominent on the ridgetop.
- **Long, straight roads and tracks**, often with **wide verges**, including Ermine Street, which follows the route of a key Roman north–south route.
- **Vernacular architecture and walling**, especially in villages, of local **warm-coloured limestone** with dark brown pantiles.

4.2.3 Within the 'Opportunities' section, the following statements of environmental opportunity are of relevance to the area:

- SEO 1: **Enhance the agricultural landscape** and soils to increase efficiency of food production, **conserve and connect fragmented patches of limestone grassland** and woodland and **maintain the traditional fabric** of the rural landscape, to preserve sense of place and sense of history, protect water quality, **enhance biodiversity** and **improve resilience to climate change**.
- SEO 2: Protect and sympathetically manage geological features and historic features such as Ermine Street Roman road, medieval earthworks, industrial buildings, historic drystone wall networks and traditional villages, to **sustain a sense of history** and sense of place, providing interpretation to aid understanding of the landscape.
- SEO 3: Ensure that new development is planned and executed to **preserve a sense of place, sense of history, tranquillity and biodiversity**, while minimising water use and avoiding exacerbation of flooding and habitat fragmentation.
- SEO 4: **Enhance the provision for access and recreation** while maintaining the tranquillity of undisturbed areas and providing educational opportunities and interpretation.

South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

4.2.4 The most recently published Landscape Character Assessment of relevance to the site is the South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment, which was published in 2007[17].

[17] LandscapeCharacterAssement0.pdf (accessed February 2025)

4.2.5 The Character assessment breaks South Kesteven into 7 Character Areas and the site is located in the **Southern Lincolnshire Edge Character Area**. The 'Distinctive 'Characteristics' are described as:

- **Large-scale open arable landscape**.
- Dominant **western scarp slope** known as the 'Cliff'.
- **Large rectilinear fields** with some **fragmented hedgerows** and **shelterbelts**.
- **Sparse settlement** pattern on top of the escarpment.
- Active and redundant **airfields**.

The landscape management objectives for the South Lincolnshire Edge include:

- **Retain and enhance traditional field boundaries** including **hedgerows** and **limestone walls**.
- **Maintain field sizes**, avoiding rationalisation into larger fields.
- **Protect and enhance shelterbelts and woodland**.
- Maintain traditional village forms.
- Use of limestone for new construction in the villages or countryside.
- Protect historic parks.
- Large-scale agricultural buildings could be acceptable if carefully designed with **appropriate landscape schemes**.

4.3 Site-Specific Appraisal

4.3.1 The following paragraphs provide descriptions of the site, which should be read alongside **Appendix 1** Topography **Figure LA.05** and Site Context **Figure LA.06,** and Site Photographs **Figures LA.07.**

The landscape and features of the site

4.3.2 The site comprises of low-lying agricultural fields surrounding and to the north of Glebe Farm, circa 4km north of the village of Ropsley and circa 800m west of the hamlet of Oasby, around 7.5km east of Grantham town centre. It lies within a predominantly flat lowland area, forming part of a broader agricultural landscape interspersed with occasional areas of slight undulation, small woodland blocks and nucleated villages. The site itself gently undulates, but is largely level, with elevations ranging from approximately 86m to 99m AOD. The wider study area follows a similar pattern of gentle undulation, with land levels varying between approximately 50m and 130m AOD, reaching a high point around Bellmount Tower to the west.

4.3.3 The site comprises seven adjacent fields of varying sizes, a characteristic of the regional landscape. These fields are generally rectangular or square in shape and are bounded by hedgerows interspersed with occasional trees, with some boundary ditches present for drainage. The southern boundary is along two fields to the north if Glebe Farm. The eastern boundary runs parallel to Ropsley Road, with the two separated by a series of managed hedgerows of varying heights and densities. A line of telephone pylons and associated cables also follows this boundary. The northern boundary is delineated by an intact hedgerow, beyond which lie neighbouring fields, with an area of scrub woodland vegetation located just beyond the northeastern corner of the site. The western boundary consists of a series of hedgerows of varying quality and size, separating the site from adjacent field parcels. Close to the southern fields, the farm buildings associated with Glebe Farm are present.

4.3.4 Beyond the site, the surrounding landscape is predominantly characterised by agricultural fields, which are enclosed by a combination of tree lines, hedgerows, and grass margins. This rural landscape is interspersed with nucleated village settlements, scattered farmsteads, and a number of quarries. To the west of the study area lies the town of Grantham and its associated suburbs, while to the north is RAF Barkston Heath.

4.3.5 Settlements within the surrounding area include the nucleated villages of Oasby, Welby, Aisby, Heydour, Culverthorpe, and Kelby, along with numerous scattered farmsteads and residential properties. These settlements and buildings are linked by a network of local roads. The B6403 runs in a north-southwest direction to the northwest of the site, with its closest point approximately 1.65km away. The A52, the main road through the study area, traverses the southern extents of the study area in an east-west direction, passing circa 1.7km to the south of the site. Other notable roads include Welby Road and Ropsley Road, which provide direct connectivity between the site and the surrounding settlements.

Characteristics and aesthetics of the site

4.3.6 The site comprises low-lying, gently undulating agricultural fields. The landform reflects the surrounding area, characterised by simple, flat lowland interspersed with subtle undulations that create small, elevated areas. The site is overlooked to the northeast and east by gently rising land.

4.3.7 Despite its proximity to nearby small, nucleated settlements, the site retains a rural character with a slight sense of isolation, largely due to the separation from footpaths and the quiet local roads. While intermittent trains pass to the north, the rural ambiance remains largely unaffected due to the distance and the presence of woodland pockets.

4.3.8 The relatively flat topography of the site allows for some oblique views into and across it from the surrounding landscape at close distances. The wider landscape has an open quality; however, mature trees and woodland along field boundaries limit intervisibility and filter

views, creating a semi-enclosed feel in areas where hedgerow and tree cover are more substantial. Skylines are narrow and flat.

Landscape Value

4.3.9 The characteristics, sensitivities and guidelines in the existing character assessments at national and local level and the site-specific analyses carried out for the purposes of this LVApp were taken into account as indicators of the aspects of the landscape important to the character and evaluated according to the criteria in **Appendix 3, Table A3-1** in order to determine the value of the landscape receptors.

4.3.10 The features/elements/characteristics identified as important or "key" to the landscape character of the site are identified as:

- Low-lying, gently undulating agricultural fields.
- Large rectilinear fields patterns
- Boundaries defined by managed hedgerows with occasional trees.
- Rural qualities with a sense of openness and short to mid-distance views

4.4 Effects on the Landscape

4.4.1 This section examines the nature of landscape effects arising as a result of the proposed development with reference to:

- effects on landscape fabric within the site, its features and qualities;
- effects on landscape character, including consideration of effects on designated landscapes; and
- effects on the landscape setting of settlements, public rights of way and roads.

4.4.2 Landscape character is derived from the combination and pattern of landscape elements. The effects of proposed development on landscape character would arise from its relationship to these combinations and patterns, and thus the character of the landscape. Effects on the landscape features, qualities and character may occur where there are either direct or indirect physical changes to the landscape. Direct changes to landscape fabric would only occur within the application boundary.

4.4.3 The effect of the proposed development on landscape character will depend on key characteristics of the receiving landscape; the degree to which the proposed development is considered consistent with or at odds with them; and how the proposed development would be perceived within the setting, with perception being influenced by:

- the distance to the site;

- weather conditions; and
- the 'fit' of the proposed development within the landscape pattern and characteristics.

4.4.4 The LVApp covers the following scenarios:

- Construction phase - this includes the installation of the proposed solar farm and ancillary structures.
- Completion at year 15 – the fully constructed and operational solar farm.
- Decommissioning – the removal of the solar farm and associated infrastructure with the agricultural landscape fully restored.

Sensitivity

4.4.5 Landscape sensitivity is a product of consideration of the value associated with the landscape receptor and its susceptibility to the changes likely to arise from the proposed development. Criteria for determining the landscape value and landscape susceptibility are set out in **Appendix 2.** For this appraisal, the assessment of sensitivity is based on bringing value and susceptibility considerations together in one combined step, in accordance with the criteria set out in **Appendix 2**.

4.4.6 The receptors, their value and susceptibility are set out in the following table, with the resultant judgement of their sensitivity to the proposed development:

Table 4-1 Susceptibility and Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Low-lying, gently undulating agricultural fields	**Medium value**: a characteristic of the area with few detractors, not within a designated landscape.	**Moderate-Low susceptibility** as solar arrays are to be accommodated within existing topography. However, there will be a change in land use.	**Moderate sensitivity**
Large rectilinear fields patterns	**Medium value**: a characteristic of the area with few detractors, not within a designated landscape.	**Low susceptibility** as field pattern is to be retained	**Moderate-low sensitivity**
Boundaries defined by managed hedgerows with occasional trees	**Medium value:** natural feature which makes a contribution to the wider landscape.	**Low susceptibility** to change as features are to be retained and protected with appropriate buffers between the proposals and hedgerows	**Moderate-low sensitivity**

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Rural qualities with a sense of openness and short to mid-distance views	**Medium value**: local characteristics typical of the area with some detractors.	**Moderate susceptible** to change and disturbance with the construction of the proposed development	**Moderate sensitivity**

Magnitude of change

4.4.7 The magnitude of change considers the key features of the proposed development, as described in section 3.0, and the degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered by these changes or by the structures associated with the development. The magnitude of change is fully described and set out in **Appendix 3, Table Appendix 3.1**. **Table 4-2** below provides a summary of the assessments:

Table 4-2 Landscape receptors and magnitude of change summary

Landscape Receptor	Magnitude of Change
Low-lying, gently undulating agricultural fields	During Construction: **Medium** Completion – Year 15: **Medium-small** Decommissioning: **Medium-Small** reducing to **negligible**
Large rectilinear fields patterns	During Construction: **Small** Completion – Year 15: **Small** Decommissioning: **Small** reducing to **negligible**
Boundaries defined by managed hedgerows with occasional trees	During Construction: **Medium-small** Completion – Year 15: **Small-beneficial** Decommissioning: **Small-beneficial**
Rural qualities with a sense of openness and short to mid-distance views	During Construction: **Medium-great** Completion – Year 15: **Medium** Decommissioning: **Medium** reducing to **Small**

Assessment of effects on the landscape

4.4.8 Consideration of the magnitude of the changes due to the proposed solar farm is combined with consideration of the sensitivity of landscape receptors affected by the proposals to assess the degree and nature of the effect at each stage of the development, including construction, operation, and decommissioning of the proposed solar farm.

4.4.9 Final conclusions about the degree of landscape effect, whether adverse or beneficial, relate the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes, as illustrated in the indicative criteria shown in **Table A2-5**. The assessment is provided in

Appendix 3, **Table Appendix 4.2** and a summary of the effects is provided below in **Table 4.3**:

Table 4-3 Effects on Landscape Receptors

Landscape Receptors and Sensitivity	Effects during construction	Effects during operation	Effects during decommissioning
Low-lying, gently undulating agricultural fields: **moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate, adverse**	**Moderate-minor, adverse**	**Moderate-minor, adverse** Once completed: **Negligible**
Large rectilinear fields patterns: **moderate-low sensitivity**	**Minor, adverse**	**Minor, adverse**	**Minor, adverse** Once completed: **Negligible**
Boundaries defined by managed hedgerows with occasional trees: **moderate-low sensitivity**	**Moderate-minor, adverse**	**Minor, beneficial**	**Minor, beneficial**
Rural qualities with a sense of openness and short to mid-distance views: **Moderate sensitivity**	**Moderate-major, adverse**	**Moderate, adverse**	**Moderate, adverse** Once completed: **Small**

5.0 Effects on Visual Amenity

5.1 Scope and Assessment Criteria

5.1.1 This section deals with the effects on visual amenity, arising from changes in the views available to people in the surrounding area.

5.1.2 The general methodology for assessing the effects in this report is set out in **Appendix 2**.

5.1.3 The degree of the likely visual effects of the proposed solar farm is determined by relating the sensitivity of the receptors to the changes arising from the development proposals, and the degree and nature of the changes in the views available to people and in their visual amenity arising from the proposals.

5.2 Visual Baseline

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

5.2.1 Zone of Theoretic Visibility (ZTV) plans have been generated by computer to identify the geographic extents within which views may be available of the proposed development within the 3km visual study area. The ZTVs are calculated to the height of 3.5m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) to represent the 'worst case scenario.' The viewer eye-height for the ZTVs has been set at 2m above ground level.

5.2.2 The ZTVs produced include both a bare earth scenario and a screening features scenario where features such as buildings and vegetation were taken into account. The computer generated ZTV in **Figure LA.08-1** was calculated using LiDAR composite DTM (Digital Terrain Model) with a spatial resolution of 2m. This was based upon a "bare earth scenario" i.e., no allowance has been made for the potential screening by existing buildings, woodland, trees, and hedgerows. The computer generated ZTV in **Figure LA.08-2** was calculated using LiDAR composite DSM (Digital Surface Model) with a spatial resolution of 1m, which includes heights of existing buildings and vegetation in the data. The screening effects of other surface features such as individual trees and hedgerows may not be picked up by the data.

5.2.3 **Figure LA.08-1** illustrates that in the "bare earth scenario," the scarp ridge topography of the study area influences the footprint of visibility. Potential theoretical visibility spreads west from the site, onto the elevated ridge in the west half of the study area. Visibility to the east of the site is contained to the lower ridge, forming a spine through the central/ eastern part of the study area. The 'bare earth' ZTV confirms that there would be no visibility of the development in the south of the study area, beyond 2km from the site boundary, as a result of landform, which faces away from the development. Similarly, the development would not be visible in the east/ northeast of the study area, beyond 1.5-2km of the site boundary. In the west, visibility on the scarp ridge is shown to be patchy in places, influenced by local drainage features.

5.2.4 **Figure LA.08-2** shows that once surface screening is taken into account, the footprint of the ZTV is greatly reduced. The screening effect of vegetation including field and road verge boundaries limits the footprint of visibility to the site fields and the fields surrounding the site. Within 1km of the site, potential theoretical visibility spreads patchily west and east from the site, with visibility to the north limited to circa 500m by woodland blocks at Welby Hazels and Heydour Warren. Beyond 1km visibility is further reduced to patches of fields that face toward the site, such as around Welby Pastures to the east and an area west of Kelby. The remainder of the study area lies outside of the ZTV and would have no views of the development. A moderate part of the development is shown to be visible across the most of the 'screening scenario' ZTV footprint.

Viewpoint study

5.2.5 A photographic survey was undertaken to identify the potential extent of the visibility of the proposed development by locating viewpoints available to sensitive receptors. To inform the initial viewpoint selections, visual study area from the site was mapped showing the surrounding landscape designations, public access, landscape character and the predicted ZTV for the proposed development. Potentially sensitive visual receptors within the study area include residents, users of public rights of way and road users.

5.2.6 Based on the collated data, initial representative viewpoint locations were selected that relate to the "receptors," that is, residents and users of the landscape, and locations from which they may have views towards or of the site. For each of the viewpoints, the precise location was chosen during the field studies to represent the most open view available subject to local features such as vegetation, buildings or localised topographic variation.

5.2.7 A total of 8 views were photographed to illustrate the site and its appearance in publicly available locations. Of the 8 views that were taken, 6 views were carried forward as representative viewpoints for the visual amenity assessment. The locations of the 6 viewpoints (1-6) and context views (A and B) are shown on **Figures LA.08**.

5.2.8 The context photographs are shown on **Figures LA.09** and viewpoint photographs are presented on **Figures LA.10**. Photographs from within the site were also taken to illustrate its features and context, see **Figures LA.07.**

5.2.9 **Table 5.1** below lists the 6 viewpoints, the location details, the receptors represented, and the reasons for selection.

Table 5-1 Viewpoint details

Viewpoint reference	Location	Distance & direction from site	Receptors represented/Reasons for selection
01	Field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road	462m from the southern boundary of the site	Residents and local road users o Close distance view of the site from the south, on local road nearby to the site o Represents a number of receptors, including sensitive residential receptors. o The screening ZTV indicates that there would potentially be views of a moderate part of the proposed development.
02	Public right of way off Ropsley Road	866m to the south of the site	Footpath users o Middle distance view of the site from the south o The screening ZTV indicates that along short sections of the path, users would potentially

Viewpoint reference	Location	Distance & direction from site	Receptors represented/Reasons for selection
			have views of a moderate part of the proposed development.
03	Bridleway northwest of the site	130m to the west of the site	Footpath users o Close distance view of the site from the west o The screening ZTV indicates that along short sections of the path, users would potentially have views of a moderate part of the proposed development.
04	Public right of way to the west of the site	745m to the west of the site	Footpath users o Middle distance view of the site from the west o The screening ZTV indicates that along short sections of the path, users would potentially have views of the some of the proposed solar farm.
05	Public right of way along Oasby Road	1.15km to the east of the site	Footpath and local road users o Middle-far distance view of the site from the east o The screening ZTV indicates that along minor sections of the path, users would potentially have views of the some of the proposed solar farm.
06	Public rights of way junction near Kelby	1.2km to the northeast of the site	Footpath users o Middle-far distance view of the site from the northeast The screening ZTV indicates that along sections of the path, users would likely have views of the some of the proposed solar farm.

5.2.10 Table 5-2 below provides a description of the landscape context at each of the 6 viewpoint locations and description of the existing view towards the site.

Table 5-2 Existing assessment viewpoint descriptions

Viewpoint reference	Landscape context at viewpoint location	Existing view towards site
01 - Field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road	The viewpoint is located at a field gate providing access to Glebe Farm along Welby Road, to the south of the site. On either side of Welby Road are established, managed hedgerows with grass verges. To the west, at a close distance, is Glebe House, while to the south, beyond Welby Road and its associated hedgerow, are further agricultural and pasture fields. The viewpoint overlooks the field gate at the site's entrance, offering a view across the southeastern agricultural field of the site towards Glebe Farm.	The foreground of the view comprises the entrance to the site via one of the southern agricultural fields. To the left, the boundary hedgerow associated with Glebe House is visible, adjacent to the access track that traverses the site towards Glebe Farm, which sits in the midground on the left. The close and midground in the remainder of the view consists of one of the agricultural fields associated with the site, with additional site fields visible beyond the immediate field in the centre of the view. The background consists of pockets of woodland, boundary vegetation, telegraph poles, and other rural landscape features.
02 - Public right of way off Ropsley Road	The viewpoint is located along a Public Right of Way (PRoW) just off Ropsley Road, connecting to Heydour Lodge Farm to the south. At this point, the footpath extends in a south-western direction while the view looks north towards the site. In the immediate vicinity, Ropsley Road and its associated boundary hedgerow lie to the east, while to the west, a boundary hedgerow separates the immediate field from adjacent fields. A powerline crosses through the study area in an east-west direction near the viewpoint.	The foreground of the view consists of the arable field in which the viewpoint is located, extending into the midground where it is enclosed by a boundary hedgerow. Beyond this hedgerow and Welby Road, the site is situated in the midground, alongside Glebe Farm, which is visible in the centre of the view. To the east, vegetation associated with Oasby Mill Farm can be seen. The background comprises pockets of woodland, boundary vegetation, telegraph poles, and other rural landscape features.
03 – Bridleway northwest of the site	The viewpoint is situated on a public bridleway that runs along the northern edge of an arable field, parallel to a boundary hedgerow, within a field immediately to the west of the site. The surrounding landscape comprises arable fields interspersed with hedgerows and occasional individual trees.	The foreground of the view consists of the arable field along which the bridleway runs. To the north, the northern boundary hedgerow of the field is visible on the left. The field extends into the midground, where the eastern boundary hedgerow separates it from the site. Beyond this hedgerow, the northwestern portion of the site is visible, along with the roofline of

Viewpoint reference	Landscape context at viewpoint location	Existing view towards site
		Glebe Farm. The background comprises pockets of woodland, boundary vegetation, telegraph poles, and other rural landscape features.
04 - Public right of way to the west of the site	The viewpoint is located on a bridleway that runs parallel to the western boundary of the site. This bridleway connects Welby in the south to areas beyond Welby Pasture Farm to the north. Positioned on a farm track along the western edge of an arable field, the viewpoint is flanked on its western side by boundary hedgerows.	The foreground looks over across a flat agricultural field toward the site. The foreground field is bounded by a hedgerow that is gappy in places, beyond which lies a further field that neighbours the site. Beyond the slightly raised hedge boundary of that field lies the site, where agricultural buildings associated with Glebe Farm are discernible. To the south lies Glebe House. In the backdrop of the view, the mill tower at Oasby Mill is visible. The backdrop to the view is shallow, defined by even landform and tree cover. Pylon towers and cables cross a part of the view.
05 - Public right of way along Oasby Road	The viewpoint is located on Oasby Road at the junction where it connects to a Public Right of Way (PRoW) that begins at Oasby Road and extends eastward towards Culverthorpe. Flanking Oasby Road on either side are its associated verges and hedgerows, beyond which lie predominantly arable fields. To the east, a pocket of woodland is situated alongside the PRoW.	The view looks over the hedge that runs along Oasby Road. It is possible that at times of the year when the hedge is foliate, views may be further restricted, subject to hedge management. Above the top of the hedge, a narrow view is available over the immediately adjacent field to the oblique and partially filtered fieldscape beyond, including the northern part of the site. The landform between the viewpoint and the site dips at the western edge of the low ridge spine that runs through the eastern part of the study area. The skyline backdrop is shallow as a result of even landform.
06 - Public rights of way junction near Kelby	The viewpoint is located at a Public Right of Way (PRoW) junction where two bridleways and a public footpath intersect. It is surrounded on all sides by arable fields, which are separated by sparse, intermittent hedgerows. To the east of the viewpoint lies the small, nucleated village of Kelby.	The view looks across the flat field in the foreground toward the shallow fieldscape beyond. The field boundaries are formed by gappy hedgerow with some scattered trees. The agricultural buildings associated with Glebe Farm are discernible above hedgerow. Direct views of the site fields are not available as a result of the flat

Viewpoint reference	Landscape context at viewpoint location	Existing view towards site
		topography. The mill tower at Oasby Mill is discernible. To the southwest of the viewpoint at closer distance lies deciduous and conifer woodland at Quarry Farm and Heydour Warren. The skyline to the view is formed by a shallow, well-treed backdrop.

5.3 Visual receptors

5.3.1 The assessment of visual effects is described by considering how the different groups of "visual receptors" may be affected by the proposals in the site. The following is a review of the viewers (the visual receptors) and the views available to them at the selected representative locations:

People in settlements and residential properties

5.3.2 The primary settlement areas within the 3km study area include Oasby, located approximately 800 m to the east, Welby, approximately 1.2km to the west, Aisby, approximately 1.5km to the east, Heydour, approximately 1.6km to the east, and Kelby, approximately 1.7km to the northeast. Further east, Culverthorpe is situated along the eastern boundary of the study area, while the town of Grantham lies approximately 7km to the southwest of the site. Additionally, scattered farmsteads and individual dwellings are dispersed throughout the area. A representative sample of views for residents of these settlement areas has been selected for the assessment and includes:

- Residents adjacent to the site, represented by **viewpoints 01**.

5.3.3 Due to the surrounding topography, residents in the village of **Oasby** to the east would generally not have views of the proposed development, see **Figure LA.08-2,** this is also confirmed by **context view A**. The ZTV also confirms that Welby, Kelby, Heydour and Aisby would not have views of the development as a result of intervening landform and vegetation.

Users of public rights of way and areas of public access

5.3.4 The 3km study area contains a reasonable network of public rights of way, primarily radiating from and connecting various settlements in the east of the study area. A representative sample of views for users of this public rights of way network has been selected for the assessment and includes:

- Users of **footpaths within 500m of the site**, represented by **viewpoints 02, 03 and 04.**

- Users of the **footpaths over 1km** from the site, represented by **viewpoints 05 and 06**

5.3.5 Due to the surrounding topography, users of footpaths to the north would generally not have views of the proposed development, see **Figure LA.08-2,** this is also confirmed by **context view B**. ZTV **Figures LA.08-1 and LA.08-2** show that most public rights of way within the study area would not have views of the proposed solar development.

Road users

5.3.6 Users of public roads are less sensitive to changes in the wider landscape because their view is constantly changing as they travel through the landscape. Movement through the landscape results in views being filtered or partly obscured by intervening features, such as roadside hedges, and any views of the proposed development would not be the focus of interest for a long duration.

5.3.7 Within the 3km study area, the principal roads include the A52, this main road through the south of the study area, running east-west and connecting with Grantham. The B6403 runs broadly in a north-south direction to the northwest of the site, with its closest point approximately 1.65km away. Other roads are limited to minor local routes, including Welby Road which borders the site to the south and Ropsey Road to the east. A representative sample of views from these roads has been selected for the assessment and includes:

- Local road users, represented by **viewpoints 01 and 05**

5.4 Effects on visual amenity

5.4.1 The visual assessment covers the assessment scenarios described in paragraph 5.4.3 below.

Sensitivity

5.4.2 The susceptibility of viewers is affected by factors such as the distance to the viewer, the relative number of viewers affected and the importance of the site in the overall view. The context of the viewpoint may also contribute to the ability to accommodate change, for example, people viewing from residential properties or from a valued landscape might be regarded as less able to accommodate change, than those viewing from an industrial context. **Table A2-9 in Appendix 2** provides examples of High, Moderate and Lesser sensitivity, demonstrating how the contributing factors are interpreted.

5.4.3 The sensitivity of the visual receptors is assessed as follows:

- **People in settlements and residential properties**: high susceptibility to changes in their visual amenity; open unobstructed views including the site assessed as of high value: **high sensitivity**, and filtered, oblique or partial views of medium value: **moderate sensitivity.**

- **Users of public rights of way**: moderate susceptibility to change in their visual amenity; open views of the site of medium value: **moderate sensitivity** and filtered, oblique or partial views of low value: **lesser sensitivity**.
- **Users of public roads**: low susceptibility to change in their visual amenity: filtered, oblique or partial views of low value: **lesser sensitivity**.

Magnitude of Change

5.4.4 The existing views for each representative viewpoint are described in Table 5.2 above. Descriptions of the proposed development within each view is described and an analysis of the degree and nature of changes is presented in **Appendix 3, Table Appendix 3.3**. A summary of the magnitude of change is provided in Table 5-3 below.

Table 5-3 Viewpoint and magnitude of change summary

Reference viewpoints	Magnitude of change:
01 - Field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road	During Construction: **Medium** During Operation: **Medium-Small** During Decommissioning: **Medium-Small** reducing to **small**
02 - Public right of way off Ropsley Road	During Construction: **Medium** During Operation: **Medium-Small** During Decommissioning: **Medium-Small** reducing to **small**
03 - Bridleway northwest of the site	During Construction: **Medium** During Operation: **Medium-Small** During Decommissioning: **Medium-Small** reducing to **small**
04 - Public right of way to the west of the site	During Construction: **Small** During Operation: **Small** During Decommissioning: **Small** reducing to **negligible**

Reference viewpoints	Magnitude of change:
05 - Public right of way along Oasby Road	During Construction: **Small** During Operation: **Small** During Decommissioning: **Small** reducing to **negligible**
06 - Public rights of way junction near Kelby	During Construction: **Small** During Operation: **Small** During Decommissioning: **Small** reducing to **negligible**

Effects on visual receptors

5.4.5 Final conclusions about the degree of visual effects, whether adverse or beneficial, relate to the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes, as illustrated in the indicative criteria shown in **Table A2-10**. Visual receptors are grouped based on their sensitivity and the nature of the view available. For each group of receptors, representative viewpoints are listed. Detailed assessments are provided in **Appendix 3**, **Table Appendix 3.4** and a summary of the effects is provided below in **Table 5.4**:

Table 5-4 Effects on Visual Receptors

Visual receptors, sensitivity, and reference viewpoints	Effects during construction	Effects during operation	Effects during decommissioning
Users of Public Rights of Way within 500m of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: **lesser sensitivity** **Viewpoints:** **01 -** Field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road **02 -** Public right of way off Ropsley Road **03 -** Bridleway northwest of the site	**Moderate-minor, adverse**	**Minor, adverse**	**Minor, adverse** reducing to **minor, neutral** once completed

Visual receptors, sensitivity, and reference viewpoints	Effects during construction	Effects during operation	Effects during decommissioning
Users of Public Rights of Way between 500m -1.5km of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: **lesser sensitivity** And road users within 1.5km of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: **lesser sensitivity** **Viewpoints:** **04 -** Public right of way to the west of the site **05 -** Public right of way along Oasby Road **06 -** Public rights of way junction near Kelby	**Minor, adverse**	**Minor, adverse**	**Minor, adverse** reducing to **minor, neutral** once completed
Residents within 500m of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: **moderate sensitivity** **Viewpoints:** **01 -** Field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road	**Moderate, adverse**	**Moderate, adverse**	**Moderate, adverse** reducing to **minor, neutral** once completed

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Baseline

6.1.1 Tir Collective is instructed by Glebe Farm Solar Limited to prepare this Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) which relates to the proposed 38.78MW solar farm on land Glebe Farm, Ropsley, Grantham. The site covers 68 hectares, as shown on **Figure LA.01 Site location**. The solar farm development would be for a temporary period of 50 years.

6.1.2 This LVApp has assessed the potential effects of the proposed development on the landscape character and visual amenity for a 3km study area.

6.1.3 The methodology used for assessing the potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity were based on the recommendations in GLIVA3. The application of the guidance document established an appropriate scope for this assessment to be undertaken.

6.2 Summary of findings

Landscape assessment

6.2.1 Desk studies reviewed landscape designations, public access, and referred to national and local landscape character assessments, and relevant national and local policy information. The studies confirmed that the study site is not located within or close to a designated landscape.

6.2.2 In relation to the published landscape character assessments, key characteristics that are of relevance to the site and surrounding area include: large-scale open arable landscape; large rectilinear fields with some fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts; sparse settlement.

6.2.3 A site-specific appraisal was also carried out, identifying the landscape features, characteristics, and aesthetics. The appraisal confirmed the site's location circa 4km north of the village of Ropsley and circa 800m west of the hamlet of Oasby, around 7.5km east of Grantham town centre. The landform reflects the surrounding area, characterised by simple, flat lowland with subtle undulations with elevations within the site ranging from approximately 86m to 99m AOD. The site comprises seven adjacent field parcels that rectangular or square in shape and are bounded by hedgerows interspersed with occasional trees, with some boundary ditches. Close to the south of the site there are farm buildings associated with Glebe Farm. A line of telephone pylons and associated cables also follows the eastern boundary. Beyond the site, the surrounding landscape is predominantly characterised by agricultural fields with nucleated settlements, scattered farmsteads and a number of quarries. These settlements and buildings are linked by a network of local roads. Despite its proximity to nearby small, nucleated settlements, the site retains a rural character with a slight sense of isolation. The flat topography of the site allows for some oblique views into and across it from the surrounding landscape at close distances. Longer distance skylines are narrow and flat.

6.2.4 The assessment of landscape effects considered the effects of the proposed development on landscape features, qualities, and characteristics within the site and on the wider surrounding landscape character during construction, operation, and decommissioning. The findings of the assessment concluded that during construction of the proposed solar farm, effects on the Low-lying, gently undulating agricultural fields were assessed as **moderate adverse** due to the medium change for moderate sensitivity receptors. The construction phase would lead to the site being removed from agricultural use, but the low-lying, flat nature would be retained. Effects were assessed as **moderate-minor adverse** during operation over the long-term and **moderate-minor adverse** during decommissioning, but once the activities are completed, the landscape would be fully restored, and effects would be **negligible**.

6.2.5 The effects on the field pattern have been assessed as **minor adverse**, as the proposed development would be accommodated within the existing retained field pattern, which would guide the layout of the solar arrays. A small change would occur for moderate-low sensitivity

receptors. The short-term effects during the construction phase have been assessed as **minor adverse**. During decommissioning, the effects would mirror those of construction, but in reverse, and would reduce from **minor** to **negligible** once agricultural use has been fully reinstated.

6.2.6 The effects on boundaries defined by managed hedgerows with occasional trees, have been assessed part of the report. The defined hedgerow structure would be retained, protected, and strengthened through infill planting. The management of the retained low hedgerows and new proposed hedgerows would aim to improve the density and longevity of the hedgerows, reducing flailing frequency to increase the height to 2-3m and width of 2m. This would maintain the hedgerow structure as a key characteristic, while enhancing it after development. The impact of the development would result in a small change experienced by receptors of moderate-low sensitivity. During the construction phase, the effects have been assessed as **moderate-minor adverse**. As planting becomes established, the effects during the operational phase would reduce to **minor, beneficial**, due to the small-scale change experienced by moderate-low sensitivity receptors. In the decommissioning phase the impact of management and planting would result in **minor, beneficial** effects.

6.2.7 The effects on the semi-rural qualities of the site, characterised by a sense of openness and short to mid-distance views, have been assessed as **moderate-major adverse** during construction, **reducing to moderate adverse through the operational phase**. While the sense of openness would remain relatively undisturbed, the outward views and rural qualities would diminish. This reflects a medium change experienced by moderate sensitivity receptors. During decommissioning, the effects would resemble those of construction but in reverse. Effects would initially be moderate adverse, reducing to **minor, adverse** once decommissioning is completed.

6.2.8 The proposed development would introduce solar arrays, ancillary structures, and planting, resulting in a change to the agricultural character of the site. Despite this, the flat, lowland character of the landscape in which the site is located would be retained, and the changes would be fully reversible. Construction and decommissioning activities are expected to resemble large-scale agricultural operations, making them less likely to appear as dominant or intrusive over the short term. Although the solar development would constitute an adverse change to the landscape character, key features such as the field pattern and hedgerow boundaries would be preserved and enhanced, aiding the integration of the proposals. Upon the completion of establishment and decommissioning phases, the landscape would be fully restored, with the mitigation and management measures delivering beneficial effects to the landscape character and its features. There are a number of gappy hedgerows in the site which would benefit from infill planting and strengthening, providing enhancement appropriate to the defining landscape character. The simple landscape with largescale fields is considered suitable to accommodate the solar development. The proposals detailed within the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan for the scheme would result in strengthening

and enhancement of the features of the site which contribute to the character of the Southern Lincolnshire Edge Character Area.

Visual assessment

6.2.9 To confirm the baseline studies of designations, landscape character, and ZTV mapping, a total of 8 views were photographed to illustrate each site and their appearance from publicly available locations. Of the 8 views that were taken, 6 views were carried forward as representative viewpoints for the visual amenity assessment.

6.2.10 The visual assessment determined that users of Public Rights of Way within 500m of the site with oblique, partial or filtered views of the site were considered to have lesser sensitivity. The magnitude of change for these receptors was assessed as medium during construction and medium-small during operation and decommissioning. Consequently, visual effects were judged as **moderate-minor adverse** during construction and **minor, adverse** during operation and decommissioning. Once decommissioning is complete, effects would reduce to **minor, neutral** as the site is restored and managed, with the addition of established mitigation planting.

6.2.11 For users of Public Rights of Way between 500m - 1.5km of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site, effects were assessed as **minor, adverse** throughout the lifespan of the development, limited by the slight nature of views in the narrow landscape.

6.2.12 For residents within 500m of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site, effects were assessed as **moderate adverse** throughout the lifespan of the development as a result of medium or medium-small change for moderate sensitivity receptors. Once decommissioning is completed effects would reduce to **minor, neutral**.

6.2.13 Overall, the visual effects of the development would be limited by the flat nature of the landscape and skylines which mean than views are often shallow and oblique. The flat nature of the landscape offers good scope for visual mitigation through boundary planting to provide effective screening and integrate the development into the landscape.

6.2.14 Weather conditions, as described in paragraph 1.3.13 above would limit visibility for receptors as conditions that limit visibility occur due to rainfall (117 days on average in the year) and air frost (43 days on average in the year).

6.3 Conclusions

6.3.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) has examined the landscape and visual impacts in relation to the proposed solar farm. The potential impacts have been thoroughly assessed through a combination of desk studies, a walk-over of the site, survey and reconnaissance of the surrounding landscape of the site.

6.3.2 Proposals for the site to retain and incorporate existing key landscape features such as large, rectilinear pattern and hedgerows. This would help to integrate the proposed solar farm and ancillary structures into the landscape whilst minimising any potential impacts on character. The Masterplan for the site includes mitigation and enhancement proposals as set out within the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan for provision of additional habitat and beneficial management of existing and proposed landscape features. Whilst the site would change from farmland, the characteristic flat, low-lying landscape would accommodate the development and changes would be fully restored following decommissioning, incorporating landscape enhancement through planting and management. Visual effects of the site would also be contained due to the shallow nature of the landscape with field boundary screening. The largescale agricultural landscape would accommodate the development, which would be fully reversible.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Figures

Appendix 2 – Assessment Methodology

Appendix 3 – Assessment of Effects

Appendix 1 – Figures

- **Figure** **LA.01** Site Location
- **Figure** **LA.02** Designations
- **Figure** **LA.03** Public Access
- **Figure** **LA.04** Landscape Character Assessments
- **Figure** **LA.05** Topography
- **Figure** **LA.06** Site Context
- **Figure** **LA.07** Site Photographs
- **Figures** **LA.08** Zone of Theoretical Visibility plans
- **Figure** **LA.09** Context Views
- **Figures** **LA.10** Viewpoints

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Site Location **LA.01**

Key

- Site boundary
- 1km buffers from the site boundary
- District boundaries

North Kesteven

South Kesteven

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

Scale 1:28,000 @ A3

North

TC24299 Glebe Farm.qgz

February 2025

tir collective LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
Floor 7, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Road, Cardiff, CF24 0EB

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Designations **LA.02**

Key

Site boundary

1km buffers from the site boundary

Ancient Woodland

Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland

Ancient Replanted Woodland

Historic Designations

Conservation Areas

Historic Registered Parks and Gardens

Scheduled Monuments

Listed Buildings

Grade I

Grade II

Grade II*

Ecological Designations

SSSI

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

Scale 1:28,000 @ A3

North

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Public access **LA.03**

Key

- Site boundary
- 1km buffers from the site boundary
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Other
- CRoW access land

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

Scale 1:28,000 @ A3

North

TC24299 Glebe Farm.qgz

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Landscape Character **LA.04**

Key

- Site boundary
- 1km buffers from the site boundary
- National Character Areas

South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment:

- Southern Lincolnshire Edge
- Kesteven Uplands
- Grantham Scarps and Valleys
- Trent and Belvoir Vale

North Kesteven Landscape Character Types:

- Central Plateau

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

Scale 1:28,000 @ A3

North

TC24299 Glebe Farm.qgz

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Topography **LA.05**

Key

Site boundary

1km buffers from the site boundary

m AOD:

- 20
- 30
- 40
- 50
- 60
- 70
- 80
- 90
- 100
- 110
- 120
- 130

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

Scale 1:28,000 @ A3

North

TC24299 Glebe Farm.qgz

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Site Context LA.06

Key

- Site boundary

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway

Listed Buildings

- Grade I
- Grade II
- Grade II*
- Conservation Area
- Site photgraph locations

0 100 200 300 400 m

Scale 1:9,000 @ A3

North

TC24299 Glebe Farm.qgz

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Site photograph 01: View from Ropsley Road to the southeast of the site, looking northwest

Site photograph 02: View from Ropsley Road to the northeast of the site, looking southwest

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Site photographs 01 and 02 **LA.07-1**

Page size: extended A3 w597mm, h297mm

TC25299 Site photos.indd February 2025

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ZTV: Bare Eath **LA.08-1**

Key

Site boundary

1km buffers from the site boundary

ZTV: Bare Earth

Calculated to 3.5m high

Minor part of the proposed solar farm potentially visible

Moderate part of the proposed solar farm potentially visible

Most of the proposed solar farm potentially visible

Public Rights of Way:

Footpath

Bridleway

Byway

CRoW access land

01 Viewpoint locations

A Context photos

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

Scale 1:28,000 @ A3

North

TC24299 Glebe Farm.qgz

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ZTV: Screening **LA.08-2**

Key

Site boundary

1km buffers from the site boundary

ZTV: Screened

Calculated to 3.5m high

Minor part of the proposed solar farm potentially visible

Moderate part of the proposed solar farm potentially visible

Most of the proposed solar farm potentially visible

Public Rights of Way:

Footpath

Bridleway

Byway

CRoW access land

01 Viewpoint locations

A Context photos

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

Scale 1:28,000 @ A3

North

TC24299 Glebe Farm.qgz

February 2025

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Context View A: Mill Lane to the west of Oasby looking northwest towards the site.

Context View B: PRoW to the north of the site, looking south towards the site.

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Context View A and B **LA.09-1**

Page size: extended A3 w597mm, h297mm

TC25299 Photos.indd February 2025

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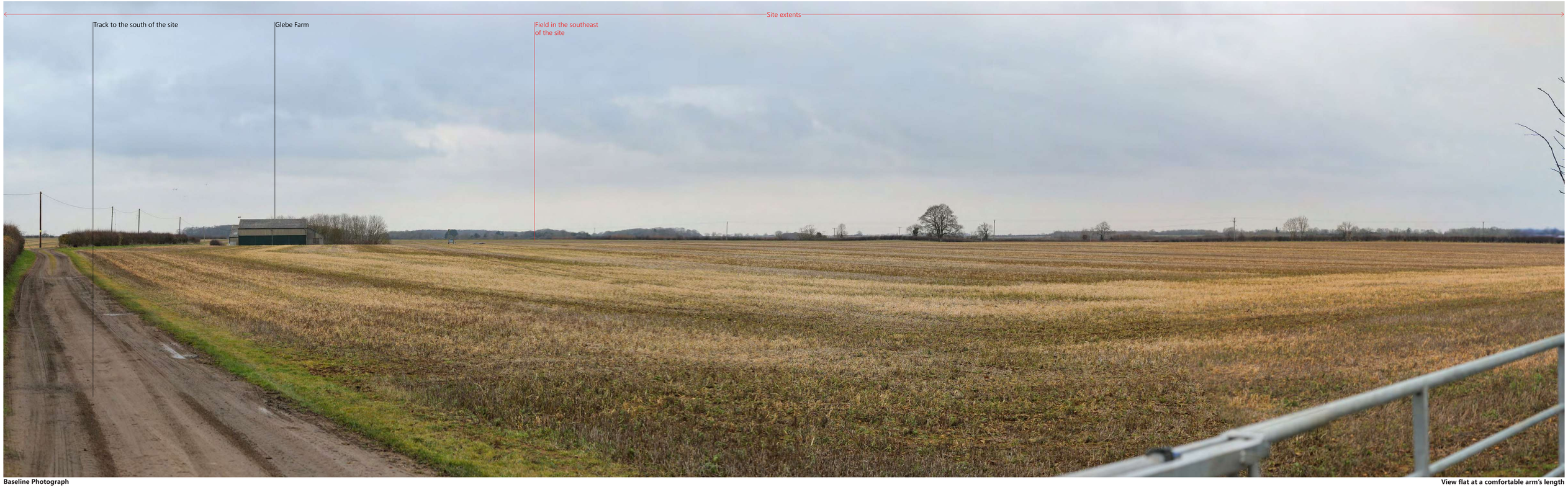

Baseline Photograph **View flat at a comfortable arm's length**

Viewpoint information:

OS reference:	E499193 N338562	Horizontal field of view:	90° (cylindrical projection)	Correct printed image size:	820 x 250mm
Ground level:	93m AOD	Vertical field of view:	27°	Camera:	EOS 5D Mk III
Direction of view:	9°	Enlargement factor:	96%	Lens:	50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Distance to site:	462m	Principal distance:	812.5mm	Camera height:	1.5m AGL
		Paper size:	840 x 297mm (extended A3)	Date and time:	06/02/2025 15:06

Project no. TC25299 February 2025

Viewpoint 01: View from field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road

Glebe Farm

LA.10-1

Glebe Farm Solar Ltd

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Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:
OS reference: E499551 N338166
Ground level: 96m AOD
Direction of view: 327°
Distance to site: 866m

Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)
Vertical field of view: 27°
Enlargement factor: 96%
Principal distance: 812.5mm
Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm
Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Camera height: 1.5m AGL
Date and time: 06/02/2025 14:57

Project no. TC25299 February 2025

Viewpoint 02: View from PRow just west of Ropsley Road

Glebe Farm

LA.10-2

Glebe Farm Solar Ltd

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Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:
OS reference: E498485 N339747
Ground level: 96m AOD
Direction of view: 122°
Distance to site: 130m

Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)
Vertical field of view: 27°
Enlargement factor: 96%
Principal distance: 812.5mm
Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm
Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Camera height: 1.5m AGL
Date and time: 06/02/2025 14:12

Project no. TC25299 February 2025

Viewpoint 03: View from bridleway to the west of the site

Glebe Farm

LA.10-3

Glebe Farm Solar Ltd

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Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:

OS reference:	E497871 N339277	Horizontal field of view:	90° (cylindrical projection)	Correct printed image size:	820 x 250mm
Ground level:	109m AOD	Vertical field of view:	27°	Camera:	EOS 5D Mk III
Direction of view:	90°	Enlargement factor:	96%	Lens:	50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Distance to site:	745m	Principal distance:	812.5mm	Camera height:	1.5m AGL
		Paper size:	840 x 297mm (extended A3)	Date and time:	06/02/2025 13:59

Project no. TC25299 February 2025

Viewpoint 04: View from bridleway to the west of the site

Glebe Farm

LA.10-4

Glebe Farm Solar Ltd

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Baseline Photograph **View flat at a comfortable arm's length**

Viewpoint information:

OS reference:	E500365 N339950	Horizontal field of view:	90° (cylindrical projection)	Correct printed image size:	820 x 250mm
Ground level:	88m AOD	Vertical field of view:	27°	Camera:	EOS 5D Mk III
Direction of view:	255°	Enlargement factor:	96%	Lens:	50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Distance to site:	1.15km	Principal distance:	812.5mm	Camera height:	1.5m AGL
		Paper size:	840 x 297mm (extended A3)	Date and time:	06/02/2025 13:06

Project no. TC25299 February 2025

Viewpoint 05: View from footpath off Oasby Road to the northeast of the site

Glebe Farm

LA.10-5

Glebe Farm Solar Ltd

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Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:

OS reference:	E499832 N341060
Ground level:	86m AOD
Diresction of view:	210°
Distance to site:	1.2km

Horizontal field of view:	90° (cylindrical projection)
Vertical field of view:	27°
Enlargement factor:	96%
Principal distance:	812.5mm
Paper size:	840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size:	820 x 250mm
Camera:	EOS 5D Mk III
Lens:	50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Camera height:	1.5m AGL
Date and time:	06/02/2025 12:50

Project no. TC25299 February 2025

Viewpoint 06: View from juction between a footpath and bridleways to the northeast of the site

Glebe Farm

LA.10-6

Glebe Farm Solar Ltd

tir collective LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Appendix 2 – Assessment Methodology

The methodology used in this assessment has been based upon the recommendations in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in April 2013 (GLVIA3).

Solar farm developments have particular characteristics which are potential sources of impact on landscape character and on visual amenity:

Table A2-1 characteristics of solar farm developments

Character	Criteria
Location	The location of solar energy developments is typically dictated by the availability and capacity of the grid connection. To make the best of the solar resource over land, solar farms are frequently located in larger fields of consistent or gentle gradient.
Glint & glare	The effect of reflection from the solar panels or galvanised array frames when viewed from the south could increase their visual prominence. Glint is the direct reflection of sunlight, whereas glare is the diffuse reflection (or reflection of the bright sky around the sun). Glint is typically more intense than glare. Solar cells are designed to absorb light to generate electricity rather than reflect it, so are less reflective than other sources of glint.
Ground disturbance	Solar arrays can be installed with minimal ground disturbance by being pinned directly to the ground. Cable trenching and the formation of access tracks also result in ground disturbance.
Construction plant	Smaller plant such as telehandlers is typically used to transport the array frames and panels around the solar development for installation, once delivered to a central location.
Activity for maintenance and repair	Personnel, with vehicles and equipment, visiting the solar farm at regular intervals, and the activities associated with the maintenance operations.
Views	Solar farms are generally constructed over several fields within existing and sometimes enhanced hedgerow boundaries. Views of entire solar farm proposals may not be possible due to screening effects of existing and proposed features.
Duration	The solar farm would be in place and operational for 50 years. Effects during the operational period are considered permanent, but fully reversible. The construction and decommissioning phases would be in the order of up to 6 months, and the effects during these periods are considered short term.

Landscape Effects Assessment

Establishing the landscape baseline

Baseline studies for assessing the landscape effects included a mix of desk study and field work to identify and record the character of the landscape and the elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual factors which contribute to it.

The elements that make up the landscape in the study area were recorded, including:

- physical influences - geology, soils, landform, drainage and water bodies;
- land cover, including different types of vegetation and patterns and types of tree cover;
- the influence of human activity, such as, land use and management, the character of settlements and buildings, the pattern and type of fields and enclosure; and
- the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape, e.g.: its scale, complexity, openness, tranquillity, wildness.

The overall character of the landscape in the study area was considered, including the particular combinations of elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects that make each distinctive, usually by identification as key characteristics of the landscape. Evidence about change in the landscape was considered, including the condition of the different landscape types and/or areas, and their constituent parts and evidence of current pressures causing change in the landscape.

Landscape value

The European Landscape Convention promotes taking account of all landscapes, including ordinary or undesignated landscapes. The relative value attached to the landscape was considered at the baseline stage to inform the judgments about the effects likely to occur, whether to areas of landscape as a whole or to individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions, at the community, local, national or international levels.

Landscape designation is a starting point in understanding landscape value, but value may also be attached to undesignated landscapes. Special Qualities, reasons for designation, relevant policies in management plans or designation-specific policies in development plans, were consulted in assessing the relative value of the landscape within designated areas.

Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact and in good condition, and where scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and natural or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape, or where there are important associations, are likely to be highly valued. For "ordinary, everyday landscapes," the judgement was based upon the degree to which they are representative of typical character, the intactness of the landscape

and the condition of its elements, scenic quality, sense of place, aesthetic and perceptual qualities.

When determining the landscape value, the following elements were considered, in addition to consideration of values associated with designations:

- The importance of the landscape, or the perceived value of the landscape to users or consultees, as indicated by, for example, international, national or local designations;
- The importance of elements or components of the landscape in the landscape character of the area or in their contribution to the landscape setting of other areas;
- Intrinsic aesthetic characteristics, scenic quality or sense of place, including providing landscape setting to other places;
- Cultural associations in the arts or in guides to the area, or popular use of the area for recreation, where experience of the landscape is important;
- The presence and scale of detractors in the landscape and the degree to which they are susceptible to improvement or upgrading; and
- Conservation interests: The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.

The following table indicates the criteria used to determine the Landscape value:

Table A2-2 Criteria to determine landscape value.

Value	Criteria
High Value	Landscapes subject to international or national designations, and non-designated landscapes where the following considerations apply: Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact and in good condition; Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape; There are important cultural and artistic associations; They are representative of typical character of the area or have a character or elements that are valued for their rarity; Particular components may be identified as important contributors to the landscape character; The landscape is valued for recreational activities where experience of the landscape is important.
Medium Value	Landscapes subject to local designations, and non-designated landscapes where the following considerations apply: Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact with few detractors;

Value	Criteria
	Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features make a contribution to the landscape; There are cultural and artistic associations; They are representative of typical character of the area or have a character or elements that are identified for their rarity; Particular components may be identified as contributors to the landscape character; The landscape is a setting for recreational activities where experience of the landscape forms part of the experience.
Low Value	Areas of non-designated landscapes whose character is in poor condition; Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features are not key characteristics of the landscape; Cultural and artistic associations are absent; They are not representative of typical character of the area, but are also not valued for rarity; Particular components may be identified as contributors to the landscape character; There is little scope for recreational activities where experience of the landscape is important.

Where the value identified falls between high, medium and low, an intermediate level of value is assigned, e.g., "low-medium or medium-high." The basis for the value assigned to the landscape receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

The landscape baseline report aims to:

- describe, map and illustrate the character of the landscape of both the wider study area and the site and its immediate surroundings;
- identify and describe the individual elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape, particularly those that are key characteristics contributing to its distinctive character;
- indicate the condition of the landscape, including the condition of landscape elements or features;
- project forward drivers and trends in change and how they may affect the landscape over time, in the absence of the proposal; and
- evaluate the landscape and, where appropriate, its components, aesthetic and perceptual aspects, particularly the key characteristics.

Assessing the Landscape Effects

The baseline information about the landscape was combined with understanding of the details of the proposal to identify and describe the landscape effects. The landscape receptors were identified, that is, the components or aspects of the landscape likely to be affected, such as, overall character or key characteristics, individual elements or features, or specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects.

Interactions between the landscape receptors and the components or characteristics of the development at its different stages were considered: construction and operation, and the different types of effect: direct and indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, adverse and beneficial.

Landscape effects considered included:

- change in and/or partial or complete loss of elements, features or aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- addition of new elements or features that will influence the character and distinctiveness of the landscape; and
- combined effects of these changes on overall character.

The landscape effects were categorised as adverse, beneficial, or negligible in their consequences for the landscape, judged from the degree to which the proposal fits with existing character and the contribution the development makes to the landscape in its own right, even if in contrast to existing character.

The assessment of the landscape effects was based on assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the change in the landscape arising from the proposal.

Sensitivity of the landscape receptors

The sensitivity of landscape receptors combines judgments of their susceptibility to the type of change arising from the development proposal and the value attached to the landscape.

Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.

The value attached to the landscape receptors was established in the baseline study.

The sensitivity of landscape receptors to change is categorised as high, moderate or lesser, in accordance with the criteria set out below to determine the susceptibility and value of the landscape receptor.

When determining the landscape susceptibility, the following elements were considered:

- The ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the landscape character and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies;
- The degree to which the changes arising from the development would alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area;
- The degree to which the changes arising from the development would alter individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to the landscape character; and
- Existing landscape studies may identify the sensitivity of the landscape type or area or its characteristics to the general type of development that is proposed.

The following table indicates the criteria used to determine the landscape susceptibility:

Table A2-3 Criteria for landscape susceptibility

Susceptibility	Criteria
High Susceptibility	The changes arising from the type of development would alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area. The changes arising from the type of development would alter or remove individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to, or add new elements incongruous to, the landscape character. The type of development would compromise the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies for the landscape. The changes arising from the type of development would alter or remove elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to the landscape character or add new elements that would reinforce the key characteristics of the landscape character.
Low Susceptibility	The changes arising from the type of development would not alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area. The type of development would not compromise the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies for the landscape. The changes arising from the type of development would not alter or remove individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to, or add new elements incongruous to, the landscape character.

Where the susceptibility identified falls between high and low, an intermediate level of susceptibility is assigned, e.g., "moderate." The basis for the scale of susceptibility assigned to the landscape receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

Table A2-4 illustrates indicative criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity combining value and susceptibility.

Category	Indicative criteria
High sensitivity	A highly valued landscape e.g., of national or international importance, whose character or key characteristics are very susceptible to change; Aspects of the landscape character are highly valued as "key characteristics" and, often identified as susceptible to change in national or local character assessments; The landscape character is highly valued as intact and in good condition and particularly vulnerable to disturbance; A highly valued landscape with no or limited potential for substitution or replacement.
Moderate sensitivity	A landscape of local importance or value, whose character or key characteristics are susceptible to change; Other characteristics of the landscape character also valued in national or local character assessments and susceptible to change; The landscape character is valued for moderate condition and not particularly vulnerable to disturbance; A moderately valued landscape with some potential for substitution or replacement.
Lesser sensitivity	No or little evidence of value or importance attached to the landscape area, its features or characteristics; Few features, characteristics or qualities susceptible to disturbance or particularly susceptible to improvement or upgrading. Good potential for substitution or replacement

Where the sensitivity based on the combination of the judgement of susceptibility and value falls between high, moderate and lesser, an intermediate level of sensitivity is assigned, e.g., "lesser-moderate or moderate-high." The basis for the sensitivity assigned to the landscape receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study and analysis of the nature of the potential effects on the receptor as a result of the proposed development.

Magnitude of Landscape Change

Effects on landscape receptors are assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility.

Table A2-5 Considerations for assessing magnitude of landscape change.

Consideration	Indicative criteria
Size or scale of change	Categorised on a scale of Large, Medium, Small, Negligible or None, based upon: The extent of existing landscape elements that will be lost (or added), the proportion of the total extent that this represents and the contribution of that element to the character of the landscape; The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered either by removal of existing components of the landscape or additions of new ones; Whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character.
Geographical area over which the landscape would be changed	Categorised on a scale of: Small: at site level, within the development site itself or at the level of the immediate setting of the site; Medium: at the scale of the landscape type or character area within which the proposal lies; Large: where the development influences several landscape types or character areas.
The duration of the changes	The durations of changes due to the development are categorised as: Short term: zero to three years; Medium term: three to twenty years; Long term: twenty to forty years; Permanent: more than forty years.
Reversibility	The prospect and the practicality of the effect being reversed.

Indicative criteria used to determine the magnitude of change is as follows:

Table A2-6 Indicative criteria for assessing magnitude of landscape change.

Magnitude of Change	Landscape Change
Great change	Major size or scale of change, affecting the landscape type or character of the area within which the proposal lies or extending over the wider area; likely to be longer term or permanently, with low prospect of reversibility
Medium change	Intermediate size or scale of change, affecting part of the landscape type or character of the area within which the proposal lies, or larger scale of change at the level of the site or immediate context; likely to continue into the medium term, with good prospect of reversibility

Magnitude of Change	Landscape Change
Small change	A minor proportion of the extent of the character type or area is affected or smaller scale of change over a larger extent; the changes occur at the level of the site or immediate context, and likely to be short term and reversible.
Negligible	No apparent change to landscape characteristics

While GLVIA3 includes the duration of the change in the consideration of the magnitude of change, in some cases a major size or scale of change of shorter duration may be considered a "great change".

Assessment of landscape effects

Final conclusions about the degree of effect, whether adverse or beneficial, relate the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes combined, based upon the following indicative considerations and criteria:

Table A2-7 Indicative criteria for assessing landscape effects.

Landscape effect	Indicative criteria
Major	Highly sensitive landscape completely degraded or greatly changed, with little or no scope for mitigation; Great improvement, sufficient to upgrade overall landscape character. Irreversible adverse or beneficial effects, over an extensive area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes.
Moderate	Medium change to moderately sensitive landscape or its character; lesser change to higher sensitivity landscape or greater change to less sensitive landscape.
Minor	Small or limited adverse change to the existing landscape or its character; greater change to less sensitive landscape; Considerable scope for mitigation; Small improvement to the existing landscape. Reversible adverse or beneficial effects of short duration, over a restricted area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to but are not key characteristics of the character of landscapes of community value.
Negligible	No perceptible change to the existing landscape or its character; The change is difficult to discern.

Intermediate conditions may be described, such as Moderate-Major, where the criteria for Moderate may be exceeded but not qualify as Major. Where magnitude of change is "None," the effect would correspondingly be "None."

Effects may be adverse or beneficial. In some instances, the effect may be offset by other considerations, for example, through the mitigation or landscape proposals, and the resulting effect may be neither beneficial nor adverse.

Visual Effects Assessment

Establishing the visual baseline

Baseline studies for visual effects establish:

- the area in which the development may be visible;
- the different groups of people who may experience views of the development;
- the location where they will be affected;
- the nature of the views at those points; and
- the different groups of people who may be affected by the changes in views or visual amenity.

The potential areas where the site and development proposal are likely to be visible were mapped. Landscape components affecting visibility, like buildings, walls, fences, trees, hedgerows, woodland and banks, were identified through field surveys and mapped where relevant.

The people within the area who may be affected by the changes in views and visual amenity – the visual receptors – were identified, for example:

- people living in the area;
- people passing through on roads and the local lanes;
- people visiting promoted landscapes or attractions; and
- people engaged in recreation of different types, including users of public rights of way, bridleways and access land.

Where relevant, views that form part of the experience and enjoyment of the landscape were noted, for example, from promoted paths, tourist or scenic routes and associated viewpoints.

The proposed viewpoints selected were discussed with the local authority, and informed by the visual appraisal, field surveys, and by desk-based research on various issues, for example, access and recreation, valued landscapes, tourist attractions and destinations, popular vantage

points, and relative distribution of population. Viewpoints were selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptors.

The details of viewpoint locations were mapped and catalogued, sufficient to allow someone else to return to the location and record the same view. Photography was carried out in accordance with the Landscape Institute, Advice Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019).

The baseline report aims to describe, map and illustrate:

- the type of people (visual receptors) likely to be affected, making clear the activities they are likely to be involved in when enjoying the view;
- details of the viewpoints and of the visual receptors likely to be affected at each;
- the nature, composition and characteristics of the existing view, noting any particular horizontal or vertical emphasis, and any key foci; existing views have been illustrated in annotated photographs identifying important components of the view.
- elements, such as landform, buildings or vegetation, which may interrupt, filter or otherwise influence the views;
- whether or how the view may be affected by seasonal or weather variation.

Assessing the Visual Effects

Predicting and describing visual effects

The baseline information about the visual receptors was combined with understanding of the details of the proposal to identify and describe the visual effects, considering:

- changes in views and visual amenity arising from elements of the development;
- the distance of the viewpoint from the development and whether the viewer would focus on the development due to its scale and proximity or whether the development would be only a small or minor element in a panoramic view;
- whether the view is stationary or transient or one of a sequence of views;
- the nature of the changes: changes in the skyline, creation of a new visual focus in the view, introduction of new elements, changes in visual simplicity or complexity, alteration of visual scale or the degree of visual enclosure; and
- seasonal differences in effects, arising from the varying degree of screening and/or filtering of views by vegetation in summer and winter.

Categorising the visual effects as adverse or beneficial (or neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity was based on judgments about whether the changes affect the

quality of the visual experience, and the nature of the existing views and the nature of the changes to the views.

The visual effects were assessed, based on assessment of the nature of the visual receptors and their sensitivity, and the nature of the effect on views and visual amenity, that is, the magnitude of visual change.

Sensitivity of the visual receptors

The people or groups of people likely to be affected at a specific viewpoint – the visual receptors – are assessed in terms of their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and the value attached to particular view locations and views.

The susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is a function of the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations and the extent to which their attention or interest is focused on the views or the visual amenity they experience at particular locations. The context of the location also contributes to susceptibility, for example, people viewing from residential properties or from a valued landscape are likely to be more susceptible to change than people viewing from an industrial context. Table A2-8 illustrates indicative criteria used to determine visual receptor susceptibility:

Table A2-8 Indicative criteria to determine visual receptor susceptibility.

Susceptibility	Criteria
High Susceptibility	Residents at home. People engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views. Visitors to designated landscapes, heritage assets, or other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area.
Moderate Susceptibility	Residents at home with oblique, filtered, interrupted views. People engaged in outdoor sports and recreation, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the activity/sport rather than the view. Visitors to the landscape where the surroundings contribute to the experience.
Low Susceptibility	People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape. People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity not on their surroundings and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes, except along recognised scenic routes, where awareness of views is likely to be high.

Where the susceptibility identified falls between high and low, an intermediate level of susceptibility is assigned, e.g., "medium." The basis for the scale of susceptibility assigned to the visual receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

Judgments were made about the value attached to the views identified, taking account of recognition, for example, in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations, appearance in guidebooks or on tourist maps, promotion of particular locations or provision of facilities provided for their enjoyment, such as parking places, sign boards and interpretive material, or references to them in literature or art.

The sensitivity of visual receptors to change is categorised as high, moderate or lesser, in accordance with the criteria set out below.

Table A2-9 Indicative criteria for visual sensitivity

Category	Indicative criteria
High sensitivity	Viewers in residential or community properties. Views experienced by many viewers. Daily, prolonged or sustained views available over a long period, or where the view of the landscape is an important attractant. A view from a landscape, recreation facility or route valued nationally or internationally for its visual amenity.
Moderate sensitivity	Viewers in residential or community properties with partial or largely screened views of the site. Frequent open views available. Viewers are pursuing activities such as sports or outdoor work, where the landscape is not the principal reason for being there or the focus of attention is only partly on the view. A view from other valued landscapes, or a regionally important recreation facility or route.
Lesser sensitivity	A view of low importance or value, or where the viewer's attention is not focused their surroundings. A view from a landscape of moderate or less importance, or a locally important recreation facility. Occasional open views or glimpsed views available; passing views available to travellers in vehicles. A view available to few viewers.

Where the sensitivity based on the combination of the judgement of susceptibility and value falls between high, moderate and lesser, an intermediate level of sensitivity is assigned, e.g., "lesser-moderate or moderate-high." The basis for the sensitivity assigned to the visual

receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study and analysis of the nature of the potential effects on the receptor as a result of the proposed development.

Magnitude of visual change

The visual effects identified are evaluated in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, duration and reversibility.

Table A2-10 Considerations for assessing magnitude of visual change.

Consideration	Indicative criteria
Size or scale of change	Categorised on a scale of large, medium, small or none, based upon: The degree of the loss or addition of features in the view; The extent of changes in the composition of the view, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development; The degree of contrast or integration of the changes with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics; The nature of the view of the proposed development, whether full, partial or glimpsed, or the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced.
Geographical area over which the changes would be experienced	The geographic extent reflects: The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible; The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development.
The duration of the changes	Categorised as: Short term: zero to three years; Medium term: three to twenty years; Long term: twenty to forty years; Permanent: more than forty years.
Reversibility	The prospect and the practicality of the effect being reversed.

Indicative criteria used to determine the magnitude of change is as follows:

Table A2-11 Indicative criteria for assessing magnitude of visual change.

Magnitude of Change	Visual Change
Great change	Major size or scale of change, affecting a large proportion of the angle of the view, or affecting views from a wide area; continuing into the longer term or permanently, with low prospect of reversibility.
Medium change	Intermediate size or scale of change, affecting part of the angle of the view, or affecting some views from the wider area, or larger scale of change in views

Magnitude of Change	Visual Change
	from within the immediate context of the site; continuing into the medium term, with good prospect of reversibility.
Small change	A minor proportion of the angle of view is affected or the contribution of the changed elements or characteristics to the composition of the view is not important; the changes are viewed from longer distances, are short term and reversible.
Negligible	Barely perceptible change or the change is difficult to discern; No change in the view or the changes due to the development are out of view.

Judging the overall visual effects

Final conclusions about the degree of visual effects, whether adverse or beneficial, relate the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes, as illustrated in the indicative criteria shown in Table A2-12:

Table A2-12 Indicative criteria for assessing visual effects.

Visual effect	Indicative criteria
Major	Great change or visual intrusion experienced by highly sensitive viewers or from highly sensitive public viewpoints; The proposal would cause a great deterioration in the existing view available to highly sensitive viewers; Great improvement in the view, sufficient to upgrade overall visual amenity. Large scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view, especially where affecting people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity or people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes.
Moderate	Medium change or visual intrusion experienced by moderately sensitive viewers; Smaller change to higher sensitivity viewers or greater change to less sensitive viewers.
Minor	Small or localised visual intrusion in the existing view, especially for less sensitive viewers. Small or localised reduction in visual intrusion, or improvement in the view. Reversible short-term changes, in views available to people for whom the view of the landscape is not the principal focus of interest.
Negligible	Negligible change in the view or the change is difficult to discern even for a highly sensitive viewer.

In addition to these criteria, in some instances the effect may be discernible or greater, but offset by other considerations, for example, through the mitigation or landscape proposals for the development, and the resulting effect is neither beneficial nor adverse.

Appendix 3 – Assessment of Effects

Table Appendix 3.1: Landscape Magnitude of Change

Landscape Receptor	Magnitude of Change during construction	Magnitude of Change at 15 years of operation	Magnitude of Change at decommissioning
Low-lying, gently undulating agricultural fields	Construction activities would introduce movement and noise, though these effects would be partially absorbed within the existing context of Webly and Ropsley roads, as well as the ongoing agricultural activities typical of the area. The construction phase would result in the removal of arable fields from production; however, the gently undulating landform would remain largely unchanged. The scale of change is assessed as medium, affecting a medium-sized geographical area. While the construction activities would be temporary, they would lead to long-term alterations to the site. Consequently, the magnitude of change is considered to be **medium**.	The agricultural use of the site would be replaced by the proposed solar farm, with established underplanted grassland and associated mitigative planting. Despite this change in land use, the characteristic gently undulating and low-lying topography would be retained. The scale of change is assessed as medium-small, affecting a relatively limited geographical area. Although these changes would be long-term, the overall magnitude of change is considered to be **medium-small.**	The short-term decommissioning activities would be similar to the construction phase but in reverse. The scale of change is assessed as medium-small, affecting a small geographical area. The overall magnitude of change is considered to be **medium-small.** However, following the completion of decommissioning activities, the magnitude of change would gradually reduce to **negligible** as the site is reinstated to arable farmland.
Large rectilinear fields patterns	The proposed solar farm development would be integrated within the existing retained field pattern typical of the area, which would help to contain movement and associated sound generated by construction activities. Proposed mitigation planting may subtly alter the existing field patterns. The scale of changes to the field pattern is assessed as small, primarily affecting the site and its immediate surroundings. While these modifications would be long-term, they would remain reversible. Consequently, the magnitude of change is considered to be **small**.	The solar arrays and associated infrastructure would be shaped and integrated within the existing retained field pattern. Mitigation proposals would enhance the hedgerow features that define the field pattern, with these enhancements being permanent. The scale of change to the field pattern is assessed as small, limited to the geographical area of the site and its immediate surroundings. Overall, the magnitude of change is considered to be **small**.	The short-term activities would be similar to the construction activities, but in reverse. The scale of the changes would be medium-small over a small geographical area. The magnitude of change is considered to be **small**. Following the completion of the activities, over time the magnitude of change would reduce to **negligible** as arable farmland is reinstated, and the field pattern is retained, managed, and strengthened.

Landscape Receptor	Magnitude of Change during construction	Magnitude of Change at 15 years of operation	Magnitude of Change at decommissioning
Boundaries defined by managed hedgerows with occasional trees	The existing hedgerows and sparse tree coverage would be preserved and safeguarded with appropriate buffers established around Root Protection Areas. Proposed mitigation planting, including new hedgerows and trees would subtly modify the existing boundaries while integrating with the surrounding vegetation. The scale of change is assessed as small, affecting a limited geographical area. While these alterations would be permanent, they would complement and reinforce the existing landscape character. Consequently, the magnitude of change is considered to be **medium-small.**	The field boundaries, consisting of hedgerows interspersed with sparse tree cover, would be retained and strengthened through infill planting. Any gappy hedgerows would be infilled/replanted with native species, and existing hedgerows defining the field boundaries would be actively managed to develop structure. By year 15, these mitigation and enhancement measures would be well established. The scale of change is assessed as small, affecting the site and its immediate setting. The hedgerow structure would remain intact and in keeping with the characteristics of the area, with some enhancements in specific locations. The contribution of these enhancements to the hedgerow structure would continue to increase throughout the operational lifespan of the development. Consequently, the magnitude of change is assessed as **small, beneficial.**	The short-term activities would mirror the construction phase but in reverse. These changes would be of medium-small scale, affecting a limited geographical area. Once planting is established, the hedgerows are expected to develop improved structure, enhancing both the landscape and visual value while also contributing to better ecological connectivity. Following the completion of decommissioning, the magnitude of change is assessed as **small, beneficial**, as arable farmland is reinstated and the planting becomes fully established.
Rural qualities with a sense of openness and short to mid-distance views	Construction activities within the site would introduce additional noise and movement, diminishing the sense of tranquillity and the rural qualities of the site. As construction progresses, these rural qualities would be further affected, with some short to mid distance views also becoming disrupted. However, the overall sense of openness across much of the site is expected to be maintained. The scale of the changes is assessed as medium-large, affecting a medium geographical area. While the construction phase would be temporary, it would result in long-term alterations. Consequently, the magnitude of change is considered to be **medium-great.**	At year 15 of operation, the development is expected to have diminished some of the rural characteristics of the site, particularly in a landscape with limited existing renewable energy and infrastructure coverage. The solar farm infrastructure and proposed planting would disrupt some mid-distance views to the east, west, and south. However, the overall sense of openness across much of the site would largely be preserved. Additionally, the proposed planting may contribute to the retention and enhancement of some rural qualities. The scale of the changes is assessed as medium, affecting a medium geographical area. While these changes would be long-term, the magnitude of change is considered to be **medium**.	The short-term activities during decommissioning would mirror the construction phase, but in reverse. Upon decommissioning, the semi-rural qualities of the site would be restored, along with the sense of openness; however, some views may be partially obstructed due to the establishment of mitigation planting. The scale of these changes would be medium, affecting a medium geographical area. The magnitude of change is initially assessed as **medium**. However, following the completion of decommissioning activities, the magnitude of change would reduce to **small** as the site is reinstated to arable farmland and the planting continues to establish.

Table Appendix 3.2: Landscape effects

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity to changes arising from the proposals	Magnitude of change	Degree & nature of effects during construction	Degree & nature of effects at 15 years of operation	Degree & nature of effects during decommissioning
Low-lying, gently undulating agricultural fields	**Moderate sensitivity**	During Construction: **Medium** Completion – Year 15: **Medium-small** Decommissioning:	Effects would be **moderate adverse** due to the medium change for the moderately sensitive receptor.	The effects are assessed as **moderate-minor adverse**, resulting from medium-small changes to the arable landscape, while key characteristics, such as the gently undulating nature, would be retained.	The effects are assessed as **moderate-minor adverse** due to the medium-small change for moderate sensitivity receptors. Once decommissioning is completed effects would be **negligible**.

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity to changes arising from the proposals	Magnitude of change	Degree & nature of effects during construction	Degree & nature of effects at 15 years of operation	Degree & nature of effects during decommissioning
		Medium-Small reducing to **negligible**			
Large rectilinear fields patterns	**Moderate - low sensitivity**	During Construction: **Small** Completion – Year 15: **Small** Decommissioning: **Small** reducing to **negligible**	Effects would be **minor adverse** due to the small changes for moderate-low sensitive receptor.	Effects would be **minor adverse** due to the small changes for moderate-low sensitive receptor.	Effects would be **minor adverse** due to the small-scale change for moderate-low sensitivity receptor. Once decommissioning is completed effects would be **negligible**.
Boundaries defined by managed hedgerows with occasional trees	**Moderate - low sensitivity**	During Construction: **Medium-small** Completion – Year 15: **Small-beneficial** Decommissioning: **Small-beneficial**	Effects would be **moderate-minor, adverse** due to the medium-small-scale change for moderate-low sensitivity receptors.	As the planting within the site establishes, effects would be **Minor, beneficial** due to the small-beneficial scale change for moderate-low sensitivity receptors.	Effects would be **minor, beneficial** due to the small-beneficial scale change for moderate-low sensitivity receptor.
Rural qualities with a sense of openness and short to mid-distance views	**Moderate sensitivity**	During Construction: **Medium-great** Completion – Year 15: **Medium** Decommissioning: **Medium** reducing to **Small**	Effects would be **moderate-major adverse** due to the medium-great change for the moderately sensitive receptor.	Effects would be **moderate adverse** due to the medium change for the moderately sensitive receptor.	Effects would initially be **moderate adverse,** due to the small-scale change for moderate sensitivity receptors. Once decommissioning is completed effects would be **minor, adverse**.

Table Appendix 3.3: View with proposed development and magnitude of change

Viewpoint reference	View of the proposed development during construction and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development during operation and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development during decommissioning and magnitude of change
01 - Field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road	The southern boundary of the site is obscured from view as a result of the dip in the existing landform, however there would be close distance views of the construction activities in the southeastern part of the site, occurring in oblique views of the parts of the site fields that are visible. Activity relating to the construction of the new internal access track that joins the south boundary would also likely be visible above and between hedgerows around Glebe Farm. There would likely be an increased perception of movement and noise as construction activity spreads through the site.	There would be close distance views of the solar development within the southeastern and central part of the site. This would likely include partial views of the profile of solar arrays in the southeastern field. Panels and parts of the internal access track would also likely be visible through the gap in hedgerow at the end of the access track. Tree and hedgerow planting along the southern boundary would help to filter some views. There would be close distance, oblique views of the southeast and central southern parts of the operational solar farm. Some views of the solar farm would be filtered by new and existing hedgerow and vegetative planting along the boundaries of the site. However,	Decommissioning activities would be visible over the short term, with views similar to those during the construction phase, but in reverse and with established mitigation planting. The magnitude of change is considered **medium-small**; however, once the activities are completed, the changes would be **small** as the planting matures and landscape features within the site are managed and restored.

Viewpoint reference	View of the proposed development during construction and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development during operation and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development during decommissioning and magnitude of change
	Construction activity would occupy a medium-large proportion of the field of view, resulting in noticeable changes to the landscape at close distance. Activity may be perceived in context to the existing largescale agricultural activity on the site. The scale of the changes to the view would be medium, affecting the geographical area local to the viewpoint and along the access track. The magnitude of change is considered to be **medium**.	portions of the development are likely to remain visible, forming an new oblique linear feature in the adjacent field. The scale of the changes to the view would be medium-small and would extend across a medium proportion of the angle of view. The changes to the view would be long-term but reversible, and the magnitude of change is considered to be **medium-small**.	
02 - Public right of way off Ropsley Road	There will be close to middle-distance views of the construction activities in the fields of the site. Oblique views of parts of the southern and eastern fields are available, where construction activity would be discernible as it spreads across the site. There would also likely be some views of activity in the western part of the site, available above hedgerow. There would be an increased perception of noise and movement inside the site, as well as visible changes as construction spreads. This would be in context to existing largescale farming in the landscape. The scale of changes to the view is assessed as medium, affecting a medium-large proportion of the field of view. While the construction activities are short-term, they will lead to long-term changes to the landscape. Overall, the magnitude of change is considered **medium**.	Narrow, oblique views of parts of the operational solar farm would be available. Solar arrays would occupy the undulating site fields as far north as the edge of the woodland to the north. The blocks of arrays would be broken up by and visible above the existing retained field boundary vegetation and proposed mitigation within the site. In the close to mid-distance, the proposed solar farm would occupy a medium-large proportion of the viewing angle. The scale of the changes to the view would be medium-small as views would be narrow and the scheme embedded into the fieldscape because of layout within existing retained field boundaries. The impact would be experienced over the geographical area of the PRoW, looking north. While the changes to the view would be long-term, the magnitude of change is assessed as **medium-small.**	Decommissioning activities would be visible over the short term, presenting views similar to those during the construction phase but in reverse, with established mitigation planting in place. During decommissioning, the existing and proposed vegetation is expected to have grown taller and become more established, thereby partially screening and limiting views of the works. The magnitude of change during decommissioning is considered **medium-small**; however, upon completion of the activities, the changes would be **small**.
03 - Bridleway northwest of the site	Near views of construction in the northwest part of the site would be available, above the site boundary hedgerow. Construction vehicles and activity northeast part of the site may be discernible in narrow views of the site field. Direct views of the south part of the site would not be available but it is possible that the taller elements of construction occurring in that part of the site would be visible on the skyline. Construction would occur at close distance, occupying a large proportion of the field of view and resulting in noticeable changes to the landscape. Activity may be perceived in context to the existing largescale agricultural activity on the site. The geographical area affected would include elsewhere along the bridleway. The scale of changes to the view would be **medium-large**.	There would be oblique views of the northwest part of the solar development, including the arrays, perimeter fencing, planting and gapping up of the site boundary hedgerow. Narrow views of the northeast part of the development may also be available, likely including the tops of arrays above the central dividing hedgerow, which would be strengthened with new hedge planting. The tops of arrays in the central part of the site may also be just visible on the skyline. Development in the south part of the site would be obscured from view by the existing landform. The parts of the site that are visible would change to include oblique views of the solar development, set within the narrow fieldscape and partially broken up by boundary hedgerow. The scale of change would be medium. The geographical area affected would include elsewhere along the bridleway. The changes to the view would be long-term but reversible, and the magnitude of change is considered to be **medium**.	Decommissioning activities would be visible over the short term, resembling the construction phase in reverse, with established mitigation planting providing additional screening. During decommissioning, the existing and proposed vegetation is expected to have matured, further reducing visibility of the works. As a result, the magnitude of change during decommissioning is considered **medium**. Once the activities are completed, the changes would diminish to **small** as the landscape reverts to its restored state, with improved hedgerow structure because of the matured landscape mitigation measures.

Viewpoint reference	View of the proposed development during construction and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development during operation and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development during decommissioning and magnitude of change
04 - Public right of way to the west of the site	Activity relating to construction would likely be visible above the intervening field boundary hedge, at close-medium distance. Additional features during construction would be visible in the context of the existing large farm buildings. The skyline would likely remain unbroken. The perception of construction activity and movement on the site would likely be viewed as similar to largescale agricultural activity in the existing landscape. A large proportion of the view would be affected but resulting scale of change would be small. The geographical area affected would include elsewhere along the footpath, away from the main view direction. The construction activities would be short-term, leading to long-term changes. The magnitude of change is considered to be **small**.	During operation, parts of the solar arrays may be visible above the tops of hedgerows. The eye-level nature of the view would mean that the solar arrays would likely form small, additional linear elements in the view. The solar development would be visible but accommodated in the agricultural landscape. Although a wide proportion of the field of view is affected, views are slight. The scale of change would be small, affecting the geographical area of the footpath, away from eye-level. The changes would be long-term but reversible. The magnitude of change is considered to be **small**.	Decommissioning activities would be visible over the short term, resembling the construction phase in reverse, with established mitigation planting providing additional screening. The magnitude of change is considered **small**; however, once the activities are completed, the changes would be **negligible** as the planting matures and landscape features within the site are managed and restored.
05 - Public right of way along Oasby Road	There may be some slight views of the construction activities above the intervening vegetation. Much of the site is likely to be screened and filtered by hedgerow in the foreground, with additional filtering during the summer months when the vegetation is in leaf. The scale of change to the view would be small, affecting a limited geographical area. Construction activities would be short-term. The magnitude of change during construction would be **small**.	Solar arrays may be just discernible in the small part of the site that is visible; however the scale of change would be small due the small nature of views, distance and intervening filtering. Elsewhere along the route and at different times of the year views may be further restricted. The magnitude of change during operation would be **small**.	Decommissioning activities would be visible for a short period, resembling the construction phase in reverse, but with established mitigation planting offering additional screening. The magnitude of change is considered **small**; however, once the activities are completed, the changes would be **negligible** as the site is re-instated.
06 - Public rights of way junction near Kelby	There may be some slight perception of activity and movement as its spreads across the site during the construction phase, however this would be limited by distance and the flat, eye-level view. Activities would be seen in context with largescale farming activities in the existing landscape. The scale of change would be small, experienced from sections of the footpaths local to the viewpoint. Construction activities would be short-term, leading to long-term changes. Magnitude of change would be **small**.	Oblique views of the eastern part of the site would be available, along with small views of the tops of arrays elsewhere in the site, visible above boundary hedges. Narrow views would mean that new elements would be small and linear, integrated into the fieldscape as a result of the existing retained and proposed framework of vegetation. The scale of change would be small, affecting the geographical area of the footpaths local to the viewpoint. The changes would be long-term but reversible. The magnitude of change is considered to be **small**.	Decommissioning activities would be visible for a short period, resembling the construction phase in reverse, but with established mitigation planting offering additional screening. The magnitude of change is considered **small**; however, once the activities are completed, the changes would be **negligible** as the site is re-instated.

Table Appendix 3.4: Visual effects

Visual Receptors & Sensitivity	Reference Viewpoints	Magnitude of change	Degree & nature of effects during construction	Degree & nature of effects during operation	Degree & nature of effects during decommissioning
Users of Public Rights of Way within 500m of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: **lesser sensitivity**	**01 - Field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road** **02 - Public right of way off Ropsley Road** **03 - Bridleway northwest of the site**	During Construction: **Medium** During Operation: **Medium-Small** During Decommissioning: **Medium-Small** reducing to **small**	Effects would be **moderate-minor, adverse** due to medium change for lesser sensitivity receptors.	Effects would be **minor, adverse** due to medium-small change for lesser sensitive receptors.	Effects would be **minor, adverse** during decommissioning, reducing to **minor, neutral** once it is completed, due to medium-small change for lesser sensitive receptors.
Users of Public Rights of Way between 500m -1.5km of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: **lesser sensitivity** And road users within 1.5km of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: **lesser sensitivity**	**04 - Public right of way to the west of the site** **05 - Public right of way along Oasby Road** **06 - Public rights of way junction near Kelby**	During Construction: **Small** During Operation: **Small** During Decommissioning: **Small** reducing to **negligible**	Effects would be **minor, adverse** due to the small change for lesser sensitivity receptors.	Effects would be **minor, adverse** due to the small change for lesser sensitivity receptors.	Effects would be **minor, adverse** due to the small change for lesser sensitivity receptors. Once decommissioning is completed effects would reduce to **negligible**.
Residents within 500m of the site with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: **moderate sensitivity**	**01 - Field gate to the south of the site along Welby Road**	During Construction: **Medium** During Operation: **Medium-Small** During Decommissioning: **Medium-Small** reducing to **small**	Effects would be **moderate, adverse** due to the medium scale change for moderate sensitivity receptors.	Effects would be **moderate, adverse** due to the medium-small scale change for moderate sensitivity receptors.	Effects would be **moderate, adverse** due to the medium-small scale change for moderate sensitivity receptors. Once decommissioning is completed effects would reduce to **minor, neutral.**

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