



**THE DROVES**  
SOLAR FARM

# **The Droves Solar Farm**

## **Preliminary Environmental Information Report**

### **Volume III, Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual**

Prepared by: LDA Design

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# **Appendix 6.10**

## **Consultation and Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance**



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# 1 Consultation

## 1.1 Consultation

- 1.1.1 The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) was provided with the Scoping Request in November 2024 (**Volume III, Appendix 2.1**), which included a chapter setting out the proposed scope of the landscape and visual assessment and methodology for the Scheme. A Scoping Opinion was subsequently issued in December 2024 by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State (**Volume III, Appendix 2.2**). The comments from PINS in respect of the landscape and visual assessment have been summarised in **Table 1.1** below, alongside commentary on where the comments have been addressed in **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual**.
- 1.1.2 Further consultation has been undertaken throughout the pre-application phase of the Scheme, and a summary of this, as relevant to landscape and visual, is also provided within **Table 1.1** below.
- 1.1.3 The scope and information set out within this chapter has been, and will continue to be, informed by initial scoping and ongoing consultation with a number of relevant bodies. In the first instance, the information set out has been informed by the formal Scoping Opinion provided by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), with consultees having been contacted and/or providing input into the consultation in relation to landscape and visual.
- 1.1.4 The Applicant consulted with both Breckland Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to agree the broad scope of the LVIA within the PEIR and Environmental Statement (ES); the selection of representative viewpoints; and the approach to visualisations. Consultation was undertaken through a combination of email exchanges and online meetings. No consultation response relating to LVIA has been received from Breckland Council to date.
- 1.1.5 A Microsoft Teams meeting was held with the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk on 20 January 2025, to discuss the scope and approach to the assessment. As part of this discussion the council requested that extra justification and detail was required to scope out a Lighting Impact Assessment (LIA) as well as requesting additional viewpoints to be considered within the LVIA and Amenity and Recreation Assessment (ARA). The consideration of additional viewpoints and impacts of lighting is outlined and considered more fully in Section 6.7 of **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual**.
- 1.1.6 Consultation was also held with Natural England, by instruction from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), and Norfolk County Council. The response from Natural England stated that:

*“this proposal does not appear to be either located within, or within the setting of, any nationally designated landscape and therefore Natural England does not have remit to comment. All proposals however should complement and where possible enhance local distinctiveness and be guided by the Local Planning Authority’s (LPA) landscape character assessment where available, and the policies protecting landscape character in the relevant LPA’s local plan or development framework”.*

No consultation response relating to LVIA has been received from Norfolk County Council to date.



**Table 1.1 Summary of Consultation Undertaken as of January 2025**

Consultee	Comments	Response
<p>Planning Inspectorate            (on behalf of the Secretary of State)            Scoping Opinion</p>	<p>The Inspectorate considers that a LIA should be scoped in for further assessment as there is not sufficient information in the Scoping Report that the proposed approach to lighting is unlikely to cause any significant effects.</p> <p>The ES should ensure that intermittent lighting is assessed in relation to likely significant effects on humans and/or ecology. The ES should explain how the lighting design has been developed to minimise light spill and avoid direct intrusion into nearby properties.</p> <p>The Inspectorate considers that the Study Area should be informed by the extent of likely effects, including from any potential elevated viewpoints. The final extent of the Study Area should be determined in consultation with the relevant local authorities to ensure it is representative, and evidence of this should be provided in the ES.</p> <p>The decision on which viewpoints are representative should be agreed with the relevant local authorities where possible. The Applicant should demonstrate how their approach to using a ZTV complies with the Landscape Institute’s guidance on establishing a ZTV for the LVIA. The Landscape Institute’s ZTV approach treats the world as ‘bare earth’ and does not take account of potential screening by vegetation or buildings. The ZTV should be based on the maximum parameters of the Proposed Development.</p>	<p>Significant landscape and visual impacts as a result of lighting would be unlikely given that the Scheme would be unlit, with the exception of the Customer Substation and National Grid Substation. Further detail on lighting to be provided in the main ES. LIA remains scoped out within the PEIR however may be considered within the main ES once the Scheme has been refined further.</p> <p>Similar to the above approach, intermittent lighting remains scoped out within the PEIR however may be considered within the main ES once the Scheme has been refined further.</p> <p>Study Area extent was agreed with the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Council as they were the only LPA to respond during consultation. Due to the additional flexibility within the Scheme for options associated with the Grid Connection Infrastructure, this parameter has not been modelled within the PEIR photowire visualisations and instead is accounted for and assessed within the main body of the assessment later in this chapter. The three options being considered for the Grid</p>



Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>The ES should clarify how susceptibility and value are to be used for the assessment for both landscape and visual receptors. The ES should demonstrate how relevant consultation bodies have influenced the choice of receptors and the level of sensitivity assigned to those receptors.</p> <p>To help clearly distinguish between the assessment of landscape effects and the assessment of visual effects, the Inspectorate recommends separate criteria are presented for each assessment, in line with advice in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA).</p> <p>The ES should cover the establishment period of any landscaping scheme and any long-term management needs. Any assumptions made with regards to the height that proposed mitigation planting would have reached by the assessment years should be clearly presented and justified for the purposes of generating photomontages and reaching the assessment conclusions.</p> <p>The assessment of cumulative effects on visual receptors should distinguish between effect on overall landscape character and on visual impact/amenity generally, as well as any other relevant impacts such as glint and glare.</p> <p>Photomontages should show all the components of the Proposed Development and demonstrate the Proposed Development before and after mitigation, in order to understand the implications of the</p>	<p>Connection Infrastructure are all considered as part of the assessment of the Concept Masterplan.</p> <p>Agreement on viewpoint location has been sought with Norfolk County Council, Breckland Council and the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk . The ZTV is based upon the maximum parameters of the Proposed Development. Clarification on how the ZTV has been produced and on what parameters it has been modelled, is provided within the PEIR. A bare earth ZTV produces an unrefined visual envelope, but this has also been provided within the PEIR to demonstrate that the LVIA assessors have undertaken the exercise.</p> <p>The PEIR outlines how susceptibility and value relate to defining receptor sensitivity as per the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Agreement on landscape and visual receptors has been sought with Norfolk County Council, Breckland Council and Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk.</p> <p>The assessment for landscape and visual effects is addressed separately within the PEIR and both parts of the assessment clearly differentiated and referred</p>



Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>worst-case scenario and the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation. Photomontages should be provided during the winter as well as in the summer to allow an assessment of maximum visibility from chosen viewpoints and to illustrate the seasonal differences in screening provided by mitigation planting, in line with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), 3rd Edition, 2013). Photomontages should present the likely visual impact at selected locations, particularly with the effects of glint and glare without mitigation. The ES should clearly present any assumptions made with regards to the height that the proposed mitigation planting would have reached by the assessment years, for the purposes of generating photomontages and reaching the assessment conclusions. Efforts should be made to agree the number and location of the selected viewpoints for photomontages with relevant consultation bodies including local authorities, Historic England, and Natural England (NE) and evidence of this agreement should be provided in the ES.</p> <p>The LVIA should cross refer to other relevant assessments and sensitive receptors, such as cultural heritage receptors. The ES should explain how the LVIA and cultural heritage assessments have been integrated with clear cross-referencing provided between the Cultural Heritage and LVIA chapters.</p>	<p>to. The LDA Design assessment methodology by which the LVIA is undertaken is outlined in full within the PEIR and accompanying appendices.</p> <p>The LVIA covers potential effects for both the periods by which the planting mitigation is still establishing and also the period by which the planting is deemed to have matured and fully established. An 'oLEMP' will be provided as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) Application, taking into account the long term management needs of any proposed mitigation planting.</p> <p>Cumulative effects are considered in both landscape and visual terms within Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual. Glint and Glare effects are assessed and covered as part of the Other Environmental Matters chapter of the PEIR and ES.</p> <p>Agreement on the proposed approach and location of visualisations for the PEIR and main ES has been sought with Norfolk County Council, Breckland Council, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and Natural England. For the assessment within the PEIR, the visualisations would be Type 3 (photowire), which provide a higher level</p>



Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>Where the potential panel solutions are widely different in their physical characteristics, the ES should give consideration to worst-case scenarios for the visual impact of the panel types.</p>	<p>representation of proposals generally showing the scale and heights of the maximum height parameters of each area of the Site, within a photographed context. For the main Environmental Statement (ES), it is proposed that both parameters based Type 3 visualisations (photowire) and Type 3 (photomontage) are produced of an illustrative scheme. Due to the additional flexibility within the Scheme for options associated with the Grid Connection Infrastructure, this parameter has not been modelled within the PEIR photowire visualisations or ZTV and instead is accounted for and assessed within the main body of the assessment later in this chapter. The grid Connection Infrastructure will be modelled in full within the visuals and ZTV for the main ES, once its design has been refined further. For the full ES, it is proposed that the Type 3 visualisations illustrative photomontages would demonstrate potential views of the Proposed Development at both year 1 (demonstrating visual effects in the short term, following construction) and year 15 (demonstrating long term effects once any proposed mitigation planting has matured and established). Only winter photography was proposed</p>



Consultee	Comments	Response
		<p>to be used for the assessment as this demonstrates the worst case scenario within the representative/illustrative viewpoints and visualisations. PINS require summer photography to demonstrate seasonal differences in screening provided by the mitigation planting. Given that photomontages are not proposed for PEIR this will only be provided for the main ES submission.</p> <p>The approach to the LVIA has been undertaken in coordination with the projects Heritage consultant, with regard to viewpoint selection and sensitive heritage receptors in the study area. For the PEIR, cross referencing between these chapters has been undertaken where appropriate. The main ES will also follow this approach.</p> <p>The PEIR considers all proposed elements included as Principal Components within the Scheme. The main ES will also follow this approach.</p>
Natural England	<p>Consultation letter issued and follow up email sent 07.01.2025 and 17.01.2025 respectively. Natural England consultation response received. Response to</p>	<p>Mitigation strategies within the Scheme aim to complement and enhance local distinctiveness and existing landscape</p>



Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>visualisation locations was as follows <i>“this proposal does not appear to be either located within, or within the setting of, any nationally designated landscape and therefore Natural England does not have remit to comment. All proposals however should complement and where possible enhance local distinctiveness and be guided by the Local Planning Authority’s (LPA) landscape character assessment where available, and the policies protecting landscape character in the relevant LPA’s local plan or development framework”</i>.</p>	<p>character. The approach to new planting has been guided by the Local Planning Authority’s (LPA) landscape character assessments and landscape policies.</p>
<p>Borough Council of King’s Lynn &amp; West Norfolk</p>	<p>The LPA expressed broad agreement with the representative viewpoints listed in Table 1 [of the Scoping Request Report], however the impact on both the landscape and the historic landscape are a key concern for the Borough Council and they therefore requested that the following additional viewpoints are taken: (a) Priory Road, Castle Acre (b)The high points of River Road and Petticoat Drove, within the site, (c) At the Grade II Listed temple at Narford Lane, (d) Important Views listed within the Castle Acre Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>LPA requested an LIA to be undertaken.</p>	<p>Additional views requested have been photographed during surveys and assessed as appropriate within the LVIA.</p> <p>LIA remains to be scoped out at PEIR stage but may be undertaken for the main ES once the Scheme design has been refined further.</p>
<p>Norfolk County Council          And          Breckland Council</p>	<p>Consultation letter and follow up email issued to both LPA’s on 07.01.2025 respectively. No response was received.</p>	<p>Proceeded on the basis of agreement for PEIR stage.</p>



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