

Heckington Fen Solar Park

EN010123

Environmental Statement | Volume 3: Technical Appendices

Appendix 6.8: Scoping Out – Visual Assessment

Applicant: Ecotricity (Heck Fen Solar) Limited

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Pursuant to: APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

February 2023



APPENDIX 6.8 SCOPING OUT - VISUAL ASSESSMENT

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The following table provides a succinct assessment of the predicted effects experienced by static visual receptors at Viewpoints 1 – 23. This scoping out exercise is carried out in order to identify those viewpoints, and locations within the local landscape, that are likely to experience significant visual effects.

No.	Viewpoint name	Relevant part of the Proposed Development	Construction Stage - Are the predicted effects significant?	Operational Stage - Are the predicted effects significant?	Decommissioning Stage - Are the predicted effects significant?	Taken further for detailed assessment?
1.	Public Footpath Skym/2/1 and Sidebar Lane overbridge at Head Dike.	Energy Park	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes
2.	Public Footpath Heck/15/1, near the north eastern edge of the Energy Park	Energy Park	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes
3.	Littleworth Drove, near White House Farm and The Barns.	Energy Park	Potentially yes, views would be gained across the central and southern parts.	Yes, close range views.	Potentially yes, views would be gained across the central and southern parts.	Yes
4.	Sidebar Lane, near telecommunication mast	Energy Park	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes
5.	Lay by along the A17, near Garwick Cottage.	Energy Park	No, unlikely to be significant given the sensitivity of the visual receptor and gained views.	Dwellings and associated garden / perimeter vegetation would screen parts of the western edge of the Energy Park. Views would include the south western and southern edge of the Energy Park and theoretically would include the upper part of the substation – given the visibility of the 'L'	No, unlikely to be significant given the sensitivity of the visual receptor and gained views.	No

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				<p>shaped belt of trees in the centre of the Energy Park. Views north east may potentially include the distant north western corner of the Energy Park, seen through the gap in the built form along Sidebar Lane - between The Bungalow and No.1-4 New Cottage.</p> <p>No, unlikely to be significant given the medium sensitivity of the visual receptor and restricted and fleeting nature of gained views.</p>		
6.	Footway in East Heckington, near Six Hundred Farm House.	Energy Park	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes, very close range and open views.	Yes
7.	Lay by along the A1121 near Skerth Bridge.	Energy Park	No, unlikely to be significant given the intervening vegetation and built form, and sensitivity of the visual receptor.	No, the intervening vegetation and built form would screen the majority of the Energy Park. The solar modules may be identifiable amongst the vegetation and built form along Brown's Drove, but would appear as a low lying and very small element in this view. The proposed substation would be almost completely screened by the built form and frequent tree cover along the northern end of Brown's Drove.	No, unlikely to be significant given the intervening vegetation and built form, and sensitivity of the visual receptor.	No

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8.	Claydike Bank, Amber Hill	Energy Park	Potentially yes, the construction phase will be identifiable above the banks of the Skerth Drain.	Yes, medium range and open views.	Potentially yes, the construction phase will be identifiable above the banks of the Skerth Drain.	Yes
9.	Bicker Drove at Bicker Fen	Off-site Cable Route Corridor & National Grid Bicker Fen Substation Extension Works	No, the revised grid corridor is located further away than that initially appraised during the PEIR stage. Views north, towards the Energy Park are screened by the embankment to the South Forty Foot Drain and vegetation along the A17. Views towards the grid connection are interrupted and heavily influenced by the nearby substation infrastructure and Bicker Wind Farm, and closest dwelling – Poplartree Farm, identifiable as part of a wooded horizon. The proposed extension to the existing Bicker Fen National Grid Substation is substantially smaller than that appraised during the PEIR stage. Whist some effects may	No, the existing Bicker Fen National Grid Substation to the south, substation to the north, and wind turbines provide context and reduce the effects upon the visual amenity. The proposed extension to the existing Bicker Fen National Grid Substation would form a relatively minor element in the view, seen in direct context and perceived as an extension to the existing infrastructure. The large scale pylons and wind turbines in the foreground deflect the attention. The cumulative scheme Vicarage Drove [B/21/0443] would be seen immediately to the south and south east. It would partially screen the proposed extension and substantially influence the views, and the proposed substation extension seen in the background would be inconsequential. Cumulative	No, localised effects associated with the decommissioning of the introduced substation at the existing Bicker Fen National Grid Substation are unlikely to cause any significant effects.	No

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			occur, there are unlikely to be significant.	effects are unlikely to be significant, given the context.		
10.	Sutterton Drove near Sheperds Farm	Energy Park	No, some elements of the construction phase may be identifiable, but views are unlikely to be significantly affected.	<p>Based on the lines of sight, the intervening built form along Clyde Bank, for example Maryland House and Chestnut House Farm and the garden vegetation associated with this cluster of properties would screen the north eastern part of the Energy Park. This, coupled with the isolated trees located in the intervening landscape and man-made bank along Head Dike / Holland Dike would ensure that the visibility of the proposed solar modules would be extremely reduced. If visible, they would appear as a very low lying and very small element in this view.</p> <p>A small scale linear block of woodland, north of Mill Green Farm and vegetation associated with this particular property would screen the north western part of the Energy Park</p> <p>On balance, the upper parts of the solar modules within the Energy Park may appear in the distance but the overall character and</p>	No, some elements of the construction phase may be identifiable, but views are unlikely to be significantly affected.	No

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				nature of the view would not be significantly changed.		
11.	Public Footpath Ambe/5/1 near Chestnut House Farm	Energy Park	No, the construction activities will be visible as part of the medium to long range landscape, with movement identifiable on the horizon. The effects are unlikely to be significant.	Views of the proposed Energy Park would be curtailed by the vegetation associated with Mill Green Farm (to the right) and Elliss Farmhouse, which are located approx. 2km and 0.7km away, respectively. Intervening boundary vegetation, whilst modest in scale and extent, disrupts the inter-visibility and would screen parts of the Energy Park. The pumping station along Holland Dike, estimated to be approx. 3-4m in height, provides a reference point in terms of scale. The proposed energy and substation compound would be located approx. 3.5km away at their closest point. Given the distance, with the large scale shed at Six Hundreds Farm being partially screened by the aforementioned bank, it is predicted that views would not be significantly affected. The bank associated with Head Dike would screen the lower parts of the solar modules and other infrastructure. Thus, the proposed	No, the construction activities will be visible as part of the medium to long range landscape, with movement identifiable on the horizon. The effects are unlikely to be significant.	No

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				solar modules would appear as a narrow and linear element seen against the low lying horizon. Taller elements associated with the Energy Park such as the 400kV substation would be more distant and their perceived scale reduced.		
12.	Sutterton Drove near Sutterton Bridge	Energy Park	No, the roadside hedgerow along Claydike Bank restricts views. Effects are unlikely to be significant.	No, the roadside hedgerow and roadside hedgerows along Claydike Bank block views west and south west. None of the features, such as belts of trees or existing built form in East Heckington or within the Energy Park is visible. Views can be gained through a very narrow incidental gap in the roadside hedgerow. Due to the general lack of inter-visibility and highly restricted views through the breach in the roadside hedgerow along Claydike Bank, effects are unlikely to be significant.	No, the roadside hedgerow along Claydike Bank restricts views. Effects are unlikely to be significant.	No
13.	Harrison's Drove, Other Route with Public Access	Energy Park	No, the intervening vegetation and built form would interrupt views of the construction phase	The Energy Park would be almost imperceptible at the distance of approx. 2.5km away. The built form visible in this view is that located along Skerth Drain: Cattle	No, the intervening vegetation and built form would interrupt views of the construction phase	No

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			associated with the Energy Park.	Holme Farm and High House Farm. The interior of the proposed Energy Park would not be visible, with the vegetation along Brown's Drove and in the intervening fields screening views towards it. No, the intervening vegetation and built form would interrupt views of the Energy Park.	associated with the Energy Park.	
14.	Junction of Timm's Drove and Tilebarn Lane, West Low Grounds	Off-site Cable Route Corridor & National Grid Bicker Fen Substation Extension Works	Yes, medium range views of the construction activities associated with the northern and central section of the grid connection.	No, the below ground elements associated with the grid connection would not be visible. Other elements of the Proposed Development: the Energy Park and extension to the existing Bicker Fen National Grid Substation would not be visible or easily identifiable.	Yes, medium range views of the construction activities associated with the northern and central section of the grid connection.	Yes
15.	Junction of Bicker Drove and Vicarage Drove along Mill Drain	Off-site Cable Route Corridor & National Grid Bicker Fen Substation Extension Works	Yes, close range views of the construction activities associated with the central and southern section of the grid connection.	No, the below ground elements associated with the grid connection would not be visible. Other elements of the Proposed Development: the Energy Park and extension to the existing Bicker Fen National Grid Substation would not be visible or easily identifiable.	Yes, close range views of the construction activities associated with the central and southern section of the grid connection.	Yes

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16.	Public Footpath Heck/2/2, east of Heckington	Energy Park	No inter-visibility, no significant effects.	No inter-visibility, no significant effects.	No inter-visibility, no significant effects.	No
17.	Public Footpath Heck/3/1 near Littleworth Drove and Holme House	Energy Park	No inter-visibility, no significant effects.	No inter-visibility, no significant effects.	No inter-visibility, no significant effects.	No
18.	Public Footpath Skym/1/1 and Cow Drove near Whitehouse Farm	Energy Park	No, some elements of the construction phase may be identifiable, but views are unlikely to be significantly affected.	No, the bank associated with Head Dike would screen the lower parts of the solar modules and other infrastructure. Thus, the proposed solar modules would appear as a narrow and linear element seen against the low lying horizon. Taller elements associated with the Energy Park such the 400kV substation would be more distant and their perceived scale reduced.	No, some elements of the construction phase may be identifiable, but views are unlikely to be significantly affected.	No
19.	Public Footpath Skym/8/1, south western edge of South Kyme near Kyme Tower.	Energy Park	No, distance of approximately 3.5km, with views interrupted and / or screened by the intervening belts of trees.	No, whilst some elements of the Energy Park may appear in the view as part of the distant landscape, the introduced change is unlikely to cause any significant effects.	No, distance of approximately 3.5km, with views interrupted and / or screened by the intervening belts of trees.	No
20.	Sidebar Lane, near Pattingden House, South Kyme Fen.	Energy Park	Yes, medium range and open views.	Yes, medium range and open views.	Yes, medium range and open views.	Yes

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21.	Public Footpath Skym/2/1 footbridge at Head Dike, Fenside.	Energy Park	No, elevated and open views, but distant.	Yes, there is potential that due to the horizontal extent of the Energy Park views would be significantly affected.	No, elevated and open views, but distant.	Yes
22.	Claydike Bank, near Mob's Eye, Sutterton Fen.	Energy Park	Yes, medium range and relatively open views.	Yes, medium range view with open landscape and limited to no screening features in the view.	Yes, medium range and relatively open views.	Yes
23.	Brown's Drove, near No.14.	Energy Park	Yes, partially restricted but medium range views.	Yes, partially restricted but medium range views.	Yes, partially restricted but medium range views.	Yes