



Little Crow

Solar Park

Little Crow Solar Park, Scunthorpe

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT: TECHNICAL APPENDICES

APPENDIX 6.3

VIEWPOINT ASSESSMENT

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APPENDIX 6.3 VIEWPOINT ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

This Appendix provides an assessment of the visual effects of the Proposed Development from a selection of 11 viewpoints during the operational phase. For each of the assessment viewpoints a short description is given of the baseline view followed by a description of the features of the Proposed Development which would be visible from that viewpoint. For each viewpoint the commentary includes details of any vegetation, buildings or topography would affect the visibility of the Proposed Development. A comment on the sensitivity of the viewpoint, the magnitude of change experienced and the significance of visual impacts is given for each viewpoint. All effects during the operational phase of the Proposed Development are long term and permanent.

During the construction phase of the Proposed Development there would be additional visual effects in relation to construction activities including the movement of plant on site. The construction activity on site would be visible for a brief period, and as such these effects would all be short term and non-permanent. At all of the viewpoints listed below there would be no greater than a minor additional effect, tending towards no additional effect during the construction phase.

Viewpoint 1: Footpath 214, near Little Crow Covert

This viewpoint is taken from the western end of Footpath 214 within the development site area on the western Order Limit. This section of the route follows an unsurfaced farm track providing access for farm machinery to the adjacent fields. To the east, beyond the Order Limits, the footpath route leads from the B1207, approximately 1km through the woodland of West Wood, before emerging into the site area where it passes on an uncultivated grassy path, past the chicken farm complex, (on the eastern Order Limit) before joining an unsurfaced track which runs through to the western Order Limit of the development site. The elevation of the track falls westwards from the higher ground to the east via several turns in the track to an area of lower ground from within which this photograph is taken. The footpath originally crossed the arable field to the east but has been previously diverted onto the track. From behind the viewpoint the footpath exits the site and turns north onto a haul road to Santon.

Views are currently gained over the arable fields within the Order Limits. Wider views are contained to the east by Little Crow Covert and to the north by Santon Wood. Overhead powerlines run along the top of the ridge marking the horizon from this viewpoint.

In the assessment criteria as set out in Appendix 6.1, users of public rights of way are considered to have high sensitivity to a change in their view. The proposed solar farm would occupy all of the foreground views in this location beyond the 15m buffer for the access track and footpath, replacing the views over the adjacent arable fields with solar panels. The security fencing around the development site and adjacent to the track would be softened by new native hedgerow planting and the intervening verges seeded with wild flower mixes. The magnitude of change to the view from the addition of the new solar panels would be high from this position, resulting in a major visual effect on users of the footpath which would be significant.

Viewpoint 2: Footpath 214, south eastern Order Limit

This viewpoint is taken from the eastern end of the public right of way, Footpath 214 as it turns northwards beyond where it emerges from the dense, enclosed woodland of West Wood into the development site. To the east, the footpath continues along the woodland edge before turning south east where it continues through the woodland to the village of Broughton. There is also an extensive network of permissive footpaths within the woodland forming a series of circular routes as well as this public right of way which cuts diagonally through the wood. Emerging from the cover of the trees and then progressing along the woodland edge, pedestrians gain contrasting open views over the intervening arable fields. Longer distance views to the north are contained by woodland at Santon Wood wrapping around the site to the north. To the east, (beyond the extent of the viewpoint) is a large chicken farm. To the west, wider views over Scunthorpe and the adjacent Steelworks complex are restricted at this position by the crest of the ridge, marked by a line of pylons crossing the development site north to south.

The proposed solar panels would be located on both sides of the footpath each side of a 15m wide buffer for the footpath. Views of the adjacent security fencing would be softened by proposed native hedgerows. The margin between the Order Limit and the footpath would be sown with a native wildflower mix. In the assessment criteria as set out in Appendix 6.1, users of public rights of way are considered to have high sensitivity to a change in their view. The magnitude of change to the view from the addition of the new solar panels would be high from this position, resulting in a major visual effect on users of the footpath which would be significant.

Viewpoint 3: Footpath 212, near Raventhorpe Farm

This public right of way, Footpath 212 runs to the south of the Order Limit from the duelled A18 to the south west. It runs along the southern edge of the woodland to the south of the development site, through Mamby Wood to the east, exiting in the settlement of Broughton.

Existing views from this point on the footpath, (approximately 500m south of the Order Limit) as it crosses under the overhead powerline running above the arable field, are dominated by the extensive complex of the Scunthorpe Steel Works to the north west. Views towards the development site are largely screened by the band of woodland to the south of the development site. Overhead powerlines crossing the route of the footpath cut a narrow channel through the woodland adjacent to the site, creating a small potential view corridor when the viewer is aligned with the route of the poles and cables. As well as the steelworks complex renewable energy infrastructure can be seen from this position in the form of the existing Raventhorpe Solar Farm in the adjacent field to the east and the Bagthorpe Wind Farm beyond the Steel works to the northwest.

In the assessment criteria as set out in Appendix 6.1, users of public rights of way are considered to have high sensitivity to a change in their view. The potential view corridor towards the site, through the oblique opening in the trees for the pylons is so limited in width and orientation and also contains scrubby vegetation at ground level, it is judged that there would be no change to views from this footpath. This would result in no visual effect on users of the footpath at this position which would not be significant.

Viewpoint 4: Risby Road, near High Risby

This viewpoint is located approximately 4.5km north east of the Order Limits, within an area the Screened ZTV indicates potential views of the site area may be available. The viewpoint is located on a minor road which runs to the settlement of Appleby from Winterton Road to the north of Scunthorpe. There are two farmsteads located along the road at High and Low Risby. Further to the east along the road, extensive views over the Humber Estuary are gained to the north east.

The field boundary adjacent to the road is sparse, allowing views over the adjacent arable field. Further to the south lies Risby Warren an area of rough grassland containing some areas of scrub. To the north of the Order Limit is Santon Wood a deep area of woodland. An extensive network of pylons punctuate the skyline.

Users of minor roads which do not appear to be used primarily for recreational activities or for the specific enjoyment of the landscape are considered in the assessment criteria at Appendix 6.1 to be of medium sensitivity. The intervening mature woodland vegetation, particularly at Santon Wood, which extends north from the northern Order Limit screens out all potential views of the site from this position. Therefore, there would be no visual effect on users of this minor road from this position which would not be significant.

Viewpoint 5: A1029, Winterton Road, Scunthorpe

This viewpoint is located approximately 4km north west of the Order Limit. Winterton Road at this point, runs through an industrial area to the north of Scunthorpe. On the western side of the road are a series of industrial units and on the eastern side a waste recycling facility. Between this viewpoint position and the development site lies the extensive Steelworks complex which contains an eclectic collection of chimneys, storage tanks and cooling towers. Also, amongst the built form are derelict areas colonised by developing scrub. A remnant hedgerow adjacent to the road, in part limits views over the intervening area. Santon Wood to the north of the site area also wraps around the north eastern corner of the development site.

Users of minor roads which do not appear to be used primarily for recreational activities or for the specific enjoyment of the landscape are considered in the assessment criteria at Appendix 6.1 to be of medium sensitivity. People engaged in industrial and commercial activities are considered to be of very low sensitivity. The intervening industrial landscape and mature woodland vegetation on the horizon screens out all potential views of the development site from this position, therefore there would be no visual effect on users of this section of the road, which would not be significant.

Viewpoint 6: Lakeside Parkway, Scunthorpe

This viewpoint is taken from approximately 2.3km to the south west of the Order Limits, to the south of a new area of housing and commercial units including the Lakeside Retail Park. Views towards the development site include the large buildings on the southern side of the steel works. To the north east, the existing Ravensthorpe Solar Farm can be seen on the crest of the higher ground of the ridge. Views towards the development site are limited by a combination of the steel works complex and the woodland wrapping around the south of the development site.

Users of minor roads which do not appear to be used primarily for recreational activities or for the specific enjoyment of the landscape are considered in the assessment criteria at Appendix 6.1 to be of medium sensitivity. The intervening industrial form of the steel works and mature woodland vegetation screens out all potential views of the development

site from this position. Therefore, there would be no visual effect on users of this section of the road, which would not be significant.

Viewpoint 7: Holme Lane, Overbridge of M180 motorway

The M180 motorway is located to the south of the Order Limit. This viewpoint is taken from an overbridge, (approximately 3.2km south west of the development site) providing access to the settlement of Messingham to the south west from Holme Lane, a minor road which runs from the southern portion of Scunthorpe to Twigmoor Woods to the east.

Views towards the development site, from the elevated overbridge, are limited by vegetation growing on the adjacent embankment. Behind the close range vegetation lies the Steelworks complex. To the north east the existing Raventhorpe Solar Farm is visible in the open ground between the intervening areas of woodland. The woodland to the south of the development site is visible from this position with the existing Solar Farm extending in front of it.

Users of minor roads which do not appear to be used primarily for recreational activities or for the specific enjoyment of the landscape are considered in the assessment criteria at Appendix 6.1 to be of medium sensitivity. The intervening industrial form of the steel works and mature woodland vegetation screens out all potential views of the development site from this position, therefore there would be no visual effect on users of this section of the road, which would not be significant.

Viewpoint 8: Central Park, Scunthorpe

This viewpoint is from within Scunthorpe Central Park located approximately 4.3km east of the Order Limit. The park is furnished with numerous mature trees, providing containment to a network of pathways. The viewpoint photograph is taken from the central portion of the park near to the fountain. To the north and west of the formal park area and gardens are extensive playing fields, a leisure centre, water park and play area. Also located within the park area are the North Lincolnshire Council offices. To the east between Central Park and the development site is an extensive area of housing beyond which lies the Steelworks.

People undertaking slow paced recreational activities which derive pleasure from an appreciation of the setting such as walking and sitting in a park are considered in the assessment criteria at Appendix 6.1 to be of high sensitivity. The strong tree cover within the park and the intervening housing and industrial form of the steel works within the wider landscape to the east screens out all potential views of the development site from this position. Therefore, there would be no visual effect on users of this portion of the park (which is representative of the park area), which would not be significant.

Viewpoint 9: Carr Lane, near Worlaby Carrs Farm

This viewpoint is located within open farmland approximately 4km to the east of the Order Limit in a portion of the landscape indicated by the screened ZTV to have the potential to gain views of the development site and the proposed solar panels. The viewpoint is located just south of the railway line between Scunthorpe and Barnetby le Wold. The surrounding farmland is located over low-lying ground surrounding the canalised River Ancholme to the south west of the viewpoint. The photograph location was accessed via a farm track called Carr Lane, providing access to the river from the spring line village of Worlaby at the base of the Wolds to the east. The farmland surrounding the viewpoint location is sparsely furnished with trees beyond a scattering of shelter belts and copses.

The ground on which the development site is located rises to the west over the limestone plateaux forming a scarp slope within the site area to the west. Containment of this higher ground is provided by the extensive woodland surrounding the development site to the east. Steam and smoke indicating the location of the Steelworks complex can be seen to the north west above the intervening woodland.

Users of minor roads which do not appear to be used primarily for recreational activities or for the specific enjoyment of the landscape are considered in the assessment criteria at Appendix 6.1 to be of medium sensitivity. The mature woodland vegetation to the east of the site screens out all potential views of the development site from this position, therefore there would be no visual effect on users of this section of the track, which would not be significant.

Viewpoint 10: Holme Lane, Messingham

The settlement of Messingham is located approximately 5.3 km to the south west of the Order Limit. Holme Lane runs adjacent to the northern extents of the village. An area of playing fields are located to the north east of the viewpoint position on the edge of the village. Extensive views of the southern edge of the steelworks complex are gained from this position. Also visible is the existing Ravenscar Solar Farm on the ridge to the east. The development site is screened from this position by the intervening woodland wrapping around the southern portion of the site and by the large built form of the steelworks.

Users of minor roads which do not appear to be used primarily for recreational activities or for the specific enjoyment of the landscape are considered in the assessment criteria at Appendix 6.1 to be of medium sensitivity, people engaged in recreational activities not specifically focused on the landscape (e.g. football) are also considered to be of medium sensitivity. The mature woodland vegetation to the south of the site and the large built form of the steelworks to the west screens out potential views of the development site from this position. Therefore, there would be no visual effect on users of this section of the road nor the users of the playing fields, which would not be significant.

Viewpoint 11: B1207, south of Appleby

This viewpoint is located to the south west of the settlement of Appleby approximately 3.6km north of the Order Limits. The B1207, Ermine Street is lined with an intermittent hedgerow and occasional hedgerow trees. This road follows the line of a Roman Road, (linking York, Lincoln and London) to the settlement of Broughton to the south. This viewpoint photograph is taken from a field entrance which allows views over a large arable field in the foreground. To the north, elements of the Steelworks complex can be clearly seen as can the network of pylons and wires to the north of the site area. The woodland wrapping around the northern portion of the development site can also be seen beyond an intervening shelter belt of trees.

Users of minor roads which do not appear to be used primarily for recreational activities or for the specific enjoyment of the landscape are considered in the assessment criteria at Appendix 6.1 to be of medium sensitivity. The mature woodland vegetation to the north of the site screens out potential views of the development site from this position. Therefore, there would be no visual effect on users of this section of the road which would not be significant.

