



Shell Canada Limited

**Scotford Solar Power Plant and
Industrial System Designation Amendment**

June 1, 2021

Alberta Utilities Commission

Decision 26423-D01-2021

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Scotford Solar Power Plant and Industrial System Designation Amendment

Proceeding 26423

Applications 26423-A001 and 26423-A002

June 1, 2021

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The Commission may, within 30 days of the date of this decision and without notice, correct typographical, spelling and calculation errors and other similar types of errors and post the corrected decision on its website.

1 Decision summary

1. In this decision, the Alberta Utilities Commission approves applications from Shell Canada Limited to construct and operate a solar power plant at the Scotford industrial complex in the Fort Saskatchewan area and to amend the Scotford industrial system designation to include the power plant.

2 Introduction

2. Shell Canada Limited, Air Liquide Canada Inc., Heartland Generation Ltd., and ATCO Energy Solutions Ltd. hold Order 25647-D02-2020¹ that designates the electric facilities at the Scotford industrial complex as an industrial system.

3. Shell Canada Limited seeks approval to construct and operate a 4.6-megawatt (MW) solar power plant at the Scotford industrial complex and to amend the industrial system designation to include the power plant.

4. The Commission issued a notice of applications and received one statement of intent to participate from AltaLink Management Ltd. AltaLink provided subsequent comments on the industrial system designation application but stated that it did not seek further participation in this proceeding.

5. The applications from Shell require the Commission to first decide whether approval of the solar power plant is in the public interest. And if so, whether the Scotford industrial system continues to meet the requirements for designation as an industrial system with the inclusion of the solar power plant.

3 Is approval of the solar power plant in the public interest?

6. For the following reasons, the Commission finds that approval of the power plant is in the public interest having regard to its social, economic, and other effects, including its effect on the environment.

7. The Commission has assessed Shell's participant involvement program and finds that it was adequate. Shell's participant involvement program included direct contact and notification

¹ Industrial System Designation Order 25647-D02-2020, Proceeding 25647, Application 25647-A002, July 14, 2020.

of parties within 1,500 metres of the proposed power plant and Shell stated that no objections or concerns were raised.

8. The proposed power plant would be located in the Alberta Industrial Heartland, where noise from energy-related facilities is managed by the Northeast Capital Industrial Association through its Regional Noise Management Plan. In its endorsement of the Regional Noise Management Plan, the Commission required that new facilities should result in no net increase above baseline case sound levels at nearby receptors (i.e., increase in sound level above the baseline case should be no greater than 0.4 decibels).

9. The Commission finds that the noise impact assessment submitted by Shell demonstrates that the expected noise contribution from the power plant would not result in any increase above the baseline case sound level at the noise receptors. As such, the power plant is expected to comply with the no net increase requirement for noise from new facilities in the Alberta Industrial Heartland.

10. Shell retained Solas Energy Consultants to conduct a solar glare assessment. Solas determined that no red-grade glare (potential for retinal damage) is apparent at the receptors it studied. Green (low potential for after-image) and yellow-grade (potential for temporary after-image) glare was identified along two roads and a railway. Solas identified that Range Road 214 is expected to receive the most yellow-grade glare (up to 4,956 minutes of yellow-grade glare per year) and Shell submitted that Range Road 214 is a dirt road that is not heavily travelled.

11. There are currently no public safety standards or regulations associated with solar glare that apply to the power plant. The Commission accepts Solas's assessment of the potential solar glare from the power plant and does not consider adverse glare impacts to be likely. Nonetheless, the Commission expects that any glare issues caused by the power plant will be addressed by Shell in a timely manner. Accordingly, the Commission imposes the following conditions of approval:

- a) Shell shall apply anti-reflective coating to the project solar panels.
- b) Shell shall file a report detailing any complaints or concerns it receives or is made aware of regarding solar glare from the project during its first year of operation, as well as Shell's response to the concerns and complaints. Shell shall file this report no later than 13 months after the project becomes operational.

12. The proposed power plant would be located on lands that have already been cleared for industrial purposes and that are adjacent to existing industrial operations. Accordingly, the Commission finds that that the power plant is not likely to result in any significant environmental impacts. The Commission recognizes that renewable energy operations must obtain a reclamation certificate at the power plant's end of life and expects Shell to comply with all applicable statutory reclamation obligations.

4 Would the Scotford industrial system continue to meet the requirements for designated industrial systems with the inclusion of the solar power plant?

13. For the following reasons, the Commission finds that approving the application to amend the Scotford industrial system designation is in the public interest and that the industrial system, given the minor nature of the amendment, continues to meet the principles and criteria of Section 4 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*.

14. The Scotford industrial complex has been designated as an industrial system since 1999. As the Commission has previously stated, in assessing an amendment to an industrial system designation, the Commission considers that the principles and criteria set out in Section 4 would have been assessed when the designation was initially applied for. As such, it is not necessary for the Commission to make findings on the applicability of principles and criteria to aspects of the industrial system that were originally considered in the initial industrial system designation application and that are not materially altered by the proposed amendment.

15. AltaLink expressed concern about whether the proposed solar power plant fits within the criteria for industrial system designations set out in Section 4 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*.

16. AltaLink has not asserted that it has any rights that may be directly and adversely affected by the outcome of this proceeding. Accordingly, the Commission finds that AltaLink has not satisfied the test for standing set out in Section 9(2) of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act* and places little or no weight on the submissions of AltaLink.

17. The Commission finds that the inclusion of the solar power plant into the industrial system constitutes a minor alteration to the industrial system. The solar power plant is expected to supply 0.4 per cent of the industrial complex's electricity requirements and would not alter the industrial system's status as a net-importer.

18. The Commission acknowledges that the solar power plant will not be highly integrated with the industrial operations, however, the solar power plant represents only a minor piece of a much broader industrial system that is comprised of a number of large, integrated processes.

19. As such, the Commission finds that the principles and criteria of Section 4 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act* continue to be met.

5 Decision

20. The Commission approves the power plant application and grants Shell Canada Limited the approval set out in Appendix 1 – Power Plant Approval 26423-D02-2021, under Section 11 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*.

21. The Commission approves the industrial system designation amendment application and grants to Shell Canada Limited, Air Liquide Canada Inc., Heartland Generation Ltd. and ATCO Energy Solutions Ltd. the approval set out in Appendix 2 – Industrial System Designation Order 26423-D03-2021, under Section 4 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act* and sections 2(1)(d) and 117 of the *Electric Utilities Act*.

22. The appendices will be distributed separately.

Dated on June 1, 2021.

Alberta Utilities Commission

(original signed by)

Carolyn Dahl Rees
Chair

Appendix A – Summary of Commission conditions of approval

This section is intended to provide a summary of all conditions of approval for the convenience of readers. In the event of any difference between the directions and conditions in this section and those in the main body of the decision, the wording in the main body of the decision shall prevail.

The following is a condition of Decision 26423-D01-2021 that requires follow-up with the Commission and will be tracked as conditions of Power Plant Approval 26423-D02-2021 using the AUC's eFiling System:

- Shell shall file a report detailing any complaints or concerns it receives or is made aware of regarding solar glare from the project during its first year of operation, as well as Shell's response to the concerns and complaints. Shell shall file this report no later than 13 months after the project becomes operational.

The following is a condition of Decision 26423-D01-2021 that does not require follow-up with the Commission:

- Shell shall apply anti-reflective coating to the project solar panels.