

# North Farm Solar Park

## Introduction

This document provides information related to a planning application for an extension to an existing solar farm on agricultural land at North Farm near Spetisbury.

This website will act as a point of information and contact throughout the application process. Updates on the progress of the application will be published on this page and relevant documentation will also be made available.

Interested parties are invited to engage throughout the process and comments can be submitted to the applicant via [planning@northfarmsolar.com](mailto:planning@northfarmsolar.com)

Due to the impacts of Covid 19 it is not currently feasible to undertake face to face public engagements. Therefore, the website will provide a platform for public consultation, providing information for all interested parties to consider.

Questions and feedback can be provided via the above contact details and the website will remain operational throughout the planning process.



## The Proposal

The proposed solar farm seeks to provide green energy for over 6,000 homes and save over 8,600 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum.

It will diversify the landowner's income and helps to secure the long term viability of the wider farming enterprise.

The project would use the remaining capacity available on the 33kV overhead and there is no additional capacity available in this area of the electricity network." The site is located on agricultural land set back from the surrounding road network. The land is of low agricultural value and the scheme would provide an enhancement to the biodiversity of the area.

Under the proposals the site could be grazed in order to maintain some agricultural use of the land. The plans have been carefully prepared, taking account of important ecological features and the visual impact of the scheme.





## **Why this site?**

The process of selecting a site for solar farm development is based upon a detailed desktop analysis to identify sites in proximity to available grid capacity and a suitable grid connection point.

When focusing in on an area we potential sites are then selected based on the lowest impact on landscape and other visual receptors, the quality of the agricultural land, potential impacts on heritage assets, and impacts on local ecology.

For this particular project, the applicant has chosen to site the extension next to the existing solar farm so that the landscape impact from the project is confined to one project in one locality. Alternative land was available which had a better aspect (south sloping), but the impact on the landscape and other visual receptors was greater. Although the site slopes north in places, the visual impact of the project is confined to the very immediate surroundings of the project.

The site is currently used as a pig farm, with all of the associated fencing, sheds, traffic, and mud which come with that operation.

In comparison, the solar PV project operation will be inert and once the project is built, the ground will be seeded with a wildflower mix, which will bring a positive change to the benefit of the PROW which runs adjacent to the SE boundary of the project.

In addition the applicant has also proposed an area of specific biodiversity enhancement outside of the boundary of the solar project.



## Key Interesting Facts

### Solar Farms

Generate electricity locally and feed into the local electricity grid using a free source of energy (the sun) to generate electricity on bright cloudy days as well as in direct sunlight.

For every 5MW installed, a solar farm will power over 1,500 homes annually (based on an average annual consumption of 3,300 kWh of electricity for a house) and save 2,150 tonnes of CO2. Approximately 25 acres of land is required for every 5 megawatts (MW) of installation.

They represent time-limited, reversible land use and provide an increased, diversified and stable source of income for landowners.

They may have dual purpose usage with sheep or other animals grazing between rows, and can help to support biodiversity by allowing small animals access to otherwise fenced-off land, with bird and insect fodder plants and wildflowers sown around the modules.

If 10,000MW of solar was installed on the ground, it would only use 0.1% of UK agricultural land area, whilst being able to generate enough electricity for over 3 million homes.

There are no moving parts, and maintenance is minimal compared to other technologies.

There is no by-product or waste generated, except during manufacturing or dismantling.

They have lower visual and environmental impacts than other forms of power generation.

Renewables give consumers the choice of buying green electricity and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

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