

Kitland Solar Farm- FAQs May 2024

During the consultation for Kitland Solar Farm, which took place between 24th January – 9th February 2024, some questions and comments were frequently raised. Below is our response to these.

What are the benefits of solar farms?

Solar power is a clean, abundant and endless source of energy. We need a mix of all types of renewable energy generation to achieve the UK Government's net zero targets. Solar is presently the most cost-effective way to deliver green energy in the UK. Electricity generated by the sun is a third of the cost of power made from burning gas and will result in lower household fuel bills in the future. ([The benefits of solar farms](#))

Why are you building on farmland when we need it for food production?

Ground-mounted solar power is built on several types of land. As we design our projects, we seek to minimise any development on higher grade agricultural land where possible. Even if all future ground-mounted solar were built on farmland, the impact on UK food production as a result of the change in land use would be small. Solar power currently covers less than 0.1% of UK land and is expected increase to less than 0.3%. This is less than the area currently used by golf courses in the UK, which is 0.51% ([Solar Energy UK](#))

Will we still be able to walk where the solar farm is proposed, will you be retaining the pathways?

Our aim is to make the existing paths more accessible throughout the year for the enjoyment of local residents. We are working with North Somerset Council to retain and enhance recreational pathways within and around the site. This includes the re-routing of some pathways to avoid areas that have become waterlogged during times of inclement weather and to create better and more effective access through the site for walkers and other users. We are supporting these changes to the recreational network by including them in our plans.

How will you minimise traffic disruption during construction?

Our focus is on minimising the impact on local residents and the local road network, particularly during the 6-9 months construction period. We are preparing a Construction and Traffic Management Plan, which sets out measures to minimise the construction impact. This includes a prescribed route which construction vehicles and deliveries must follow as well as limitations on the timings and quantity of site deliveries. These plans will be agreed with the Highways Authority. Once operational the solar farm will attract very little traffic as it does not require a permanent on-site presence. During construction of our solar project in Yorkshire, we have established a Community Liaison Group who meet regularly to share updates and enable members to ask questions and raise issues.

Is this project going to increase the risk of flooding?

The risk of flooding is something that has been assessed as part of the pre-submission surveys and a full flood report will be submitted with the planning application. The site does not fall within flood zones classified as Zone 2 and 3 but a full flood risk assessment will be undertaken for the proposals to ensure that they will not result in an increased flood risk elsewhere.

Will I be able to see the solar farm?

Our design approach has sought to maximise the use of existing hedgerows to provide screening, as well as the use of new hedgerows and planting, and locating site infrastructure to minimise impact on viewpoints and local dwellings. At our exhibition we presented how several local viewpoints would look with the proposed development. These viewpoints are available on our website.

How long will the solar farm be in place?

The operational life of the project is expected to be 40 years. Once the solar farm is decommissioned, the land will be returned to its existing agricultural use.

Why is the project being proposed here?

This site has been carefully selected as part of a detailed feasibility process we undertake, which considers designated areas, land grade, levels of solar energy and locations where there is access to the electricity grid.

How will the project effect local wildlife?

It is a requirement for projects of this type to deliver a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain. Our plans to increase biodiversity i.e. to promote bird, bat and insect species will be incorporated throughout the site, for example the planting of new hedgerows and other types of planting. Community feedback on several environmental measures has been valuable.