



Introducing **Willows Green Solar Farm**



Invitation to public consultation event on **Wednesday 27 October** from 2pm to 7pm
at Felsted Memorial Hall, Braintree Rd, Felsted, Essex CM6 3DY



Where is Willows Green Solar Farm?

Introducing Willows Green Solar Farm

Clearstone Energy is proposing to develop a hybrid solar farm and battery storage scheme on land west of Great Notley.

The proposed temporary installation would have an export capacity of 49.9MW of renewable energy to the national grid. It would meet the annual equivalent electricity demands of approximately 15,200 homes or 26,000 electric cars, while also offsetting 47,000 metric tonnes of CO₂ (when compared to generation of electricity by non-renewable sources).

The battery storage facility will supply electricity to the local electricity network at times of peak energy demand and help make the renewable energy output of the solar farm a secure and reliable part of the UK energy supply.

As well as generating clean power, solar sites create opportunities for land management to increase habitats for biodiversity, encouraging pollinators and allowing soils to regenerate.

If planning permission is granted, a community fund of £15,000 will be paid annually for the 40-year lifetime of the project.



The Site

The site is located on Blackley's Farm, Willows Green within Felsted Parish, Uttlesford. The site lies 4.3km to the west of National Grid's Braintree substation, over an area of 114 hectares. The area is clear of any local or national planning designations and has been assessed as being Grade 3 - 91% is subgrade 3B and therefore not 'best and most versatile'.

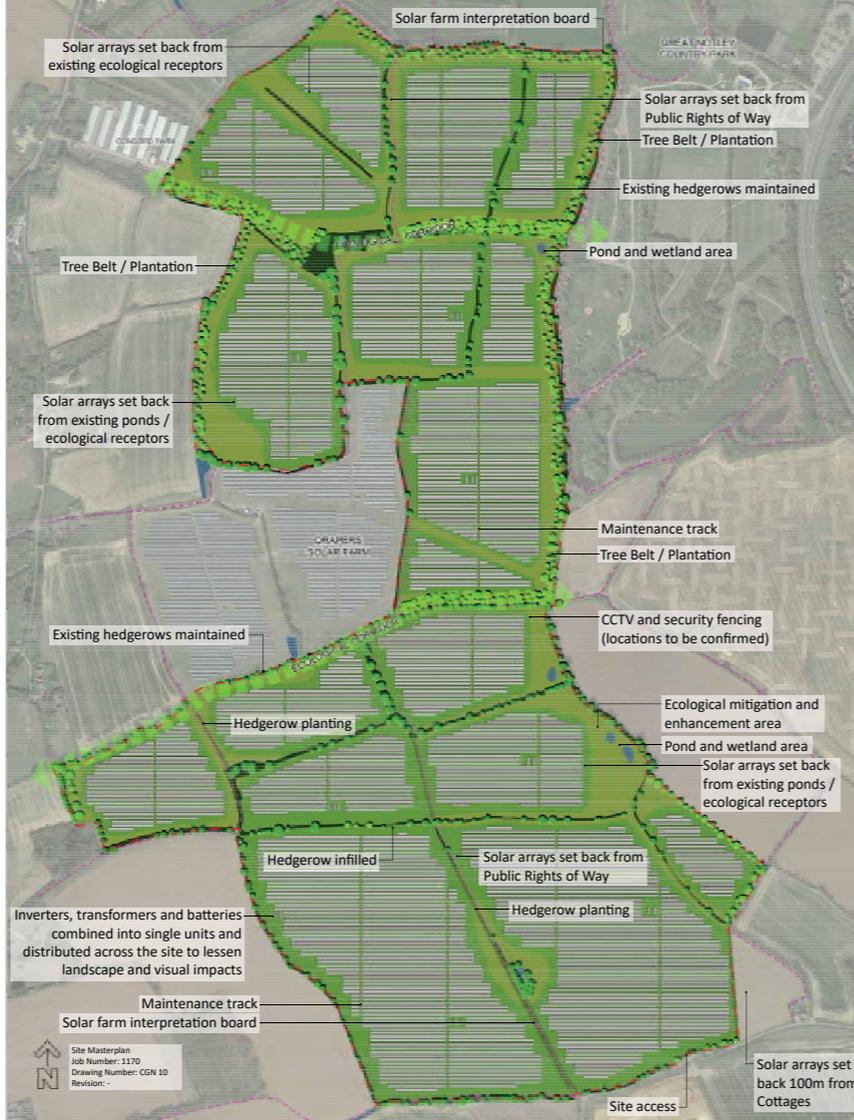
The site will be accessed via Milch Lane to the north and Blackley Lane to the south. Both are a short distance to the A131 via Main Road and Moulsham Hall Lane.

The solar panels will take approximately 24 weeks to install, during which time lorry movements will be restricted to avoid peak periods and school times. These restrictions will form part of the Construction Traffic Management Plan which is being drawn up as part of the planning application.

Once operational the site will be remotely monitored requiring only occasional maintenance visits.



Evolving concept design of Willows Green Solar Farm



The Benefits

- £15,000 will be paid annually into a community fund for the 40-year lifetime of the project.
- The project will support the UK's urgent need to transition to a low carbon future, producing significant amounts of renewable energy.
- It will contribute to the security of energy supply in Uttlesford and Essex through the provision of local, competitive renewable energy supply.
- The cost of generating solar energy is effectively free once the scheme has been built. Alongside wind energy, solar should bring down the cost of electricity for years to come.
- This is a temporary development and at the end of the solar farm's life all equipment can be easily dismantled, removed from site and largely recycled.
- A solar farm allows agricultural land to rest for the period of operation and the land use is reversed back to agriculture at the end of the project life.
- A scheme of landscape and ecological improvements will be prepared, ensuring the project provides a biodiversity net gain.
- The proposed solar farm will not require Government subsidy.





Significant Ecological Enhancements

To demonstrate measurable gains for habitat and species diversity the following ecological enhancements are to be incorporated into the development proposals:

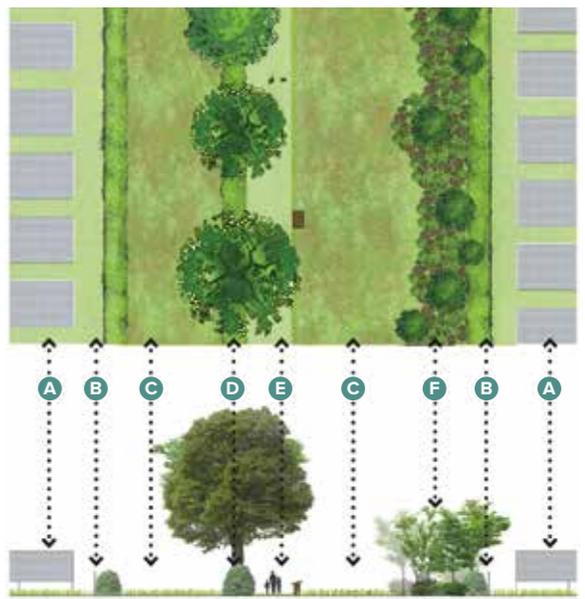
- 1** Hedgerows and field boundary trees retained and managed to encourage use by birds, bats, amphibians and other mammals.
- 2** Bird boxes, bat boxes, butterfly banks and log pile habitats to provide habitats for a wide range of animals.
- 3** Mixed native hedgerows and trees alongside site fencing screen the solar array and create varied habitat edges / ecotones. Mammals gates installed into fencing will allow animal access.
- 4** Interpretation signs explain the solar arrays and site's biodiversity strategy.
- 5** Species rich grassland under the solar arrays would improve soil condition and support a wide range of invertebrate and bird species. Sheep grazing is also possible.
- 6** Wildflower meadows strips and glades along footpaths act as a good source of nectar for bees and other invertebrates.

In addition, we will create additional ponds and improve watercourses with new bankside habitats. Cessation of intensive farming will dramatically reduce fertiliser, herbicide and pesticide runoff into watercourses.

These enhancements will be further developed as part of the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP). The LEMP secures the long-term management of our solar project in accordance with the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures.

After 40 years the site is decommissioned and left better than we found it.

Indicative footpath (section) plan



- A** Species rich grassland under solar arrays
- B** Existing hedgerows and field boundary trees retained and gaps infilled and managed
- C** Solar array fence with hedge
- D** Mown strip through the meadow for pedestrians
- E** Wildflower meadows strips and glades along footpaths
- F** Shrub belt with scattered tree planting

Indicative artist impression

Getting to Net Zero

In 2019 the UK became the first major economy in the world to pass laws to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

Put simply Net Zero means that we will put no more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than we take out. Renewable Energy has the single largest role in achieving this target as low carbon technologies such as solar and wind have matured, and can replace existing coal and gas power plants.

Draft Government Policy (EN-1) makes clear that as a nation we need to transform the energy system, tackling emissions while continuing to ensure secure and reliable supply, and affordable bills for households and businesses. This includes increasing our supply of clean energy from renewables.

Uttlesford District Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, in recognition of the need to 'protect our children's future' (Cllr Louise Pepper Cabinet Member for Environment and Green Issues, Equalities, Uttlesford District Council).



Public Consultation

You are invited to provide feedback on our draft proposals in the following ways:

1 Attend our public consultation event on **Wednesday 27 October from 2pm to 7pm**

You are invited to attend our public consultation event at which you can see our plans, learn more about our proposal and talk to the project team.

We're holding our public consultation event at Felsted Memorial Hall, Braintree Rd, Felsted, Essex CM6 3DY



2 Fill in the feedback form that accompanies this public consultation brochure.

Please read through this brochure and provide feedback to us by way of the free post feedback form.

You can register to attend our public consultation event by visiting our website www.willowsgreensolar.com

3 Visit the dedicated public consultation website: www.willowsgreensolar.com

We have set up a dedicated public consultation website, where you can find further information about our draft proposals and provide feedback.

About Us

Clearstone Energy is a leading independent developer of energy projects having secured planning consent on more than 240 MW of generating capacity, some 70 MW of which is operational.

We are working with National Grid to develop a portfolio of strategically located solar photovoltaic and battery storage installations that ensure that low carbon electricity is delivered when and where it is most needed.



Have Your Say

This brochure forms part of our pre-planning application process.

Please take your time to consider the information within this brochure, and don't hesitate to contact a member of our team should you have any questions.

We would be grateful if you could answer the feedback form and let us have your contact details for the purpose of informing the project design and our planning application. Feedback received will be included within a Statement of Community Involvement which will accompany the application.

For further information, please do not hesitate to email feedback@alpacacommunications.com

Feedback Form

To return your completed feedback form please tear it from the brochure and pop it in the post by **Friday 5th November 2021**. Alternatively, you can return your form via email to feedback@alpacacommunications.com.

Title: Name:

Address: Postcode:

Email: Telephone:

1. Has this local resident brochure been helpful in understanding our proposal? Yes No Not sure
2. With regards to the proposals you have read about within this brochure, are you: In favour In objection Of no opinion
3. Please use this space to provide any comments on the proposal. We would welcome your feedback on all aspects of the emerging design shown in the brochure.

Please provide your contact details if you wish to get a response. Any information provided will only be used for the purpose of the planning application to the Local Planning Authority and will not be disclosed with any third parties. **Your contact details will not be listed on the planning application documentation.**

Remain Informed



Please visit www.willowsgreensolar.com where information about our proposals will be updated.

020 7499 2842 feedback@alpacacommunications.com

www.willowsgreensolar.com

Should you require this document in large print, audio or braille then please contact us at the details provided.

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