

Why Solar?



HELIOS RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT



Net Zero: The proposals will deliver an export capacity of 190MW of renewable energy and will support the UK's legally binding commitment to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050 under the Climate Change Act (2008). Solar is one of the cheapest and most effective renewable energy technologies and has a crucial role to play in the transition to a low carbon future.



Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG): Well-designed and managed solar farms are proven wildlife havens and support a range of ecosystems. The proposals include a comprehensive strategy of landscape and ecological improvements, aimed at significantly boosting nature and ecology.



Reversibility: The development is designed to be entirely reversible. At the end of the solar farm's 40-year life, all equipment will be dismantled, removed, and largely recycled. The site will then be returned to agricultural use.



Agricultural Land: Intensively farmed arable land can become degraded and infertile over time. A solar farm allows agricultural land to rest, free from fertilisers and pesticides. This helps increase soil organic matter and protects the long-term agricultural use of the site for future generations.



Land Use: A solar farm provides an opportunity for multiple land uses; in addition to producing renewable energy, the site can continue to be grazed by sheep, supporting biodiversity and farming alongside clean energy generation.



Biodiversity

Biodiversity enhancements have been central to our thinking during the development of the proposals. A well-designed solar farm provides many opportunities for local ecological and biodiversity improvements. The project would represent a 40-year period in which the intensively farmed land can 'rest' while the boundary vegetation is improved and maintained to improve biodiversity. In addition, the following biodiversity benefits are being considered:

- Opportunities to create diverse grasslands, tree planting and hedgerow planting will deliver a quantifiable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- Installation of features to promote wildlife habitation such as bird boxes and bat roost boxes.
- Year-round vegetated ground providing both habitat and foraging opportunities.
- Keeping the land pesticide and chemical free, improving soil quality and enabling species to thrive, particularly invertebrates.

